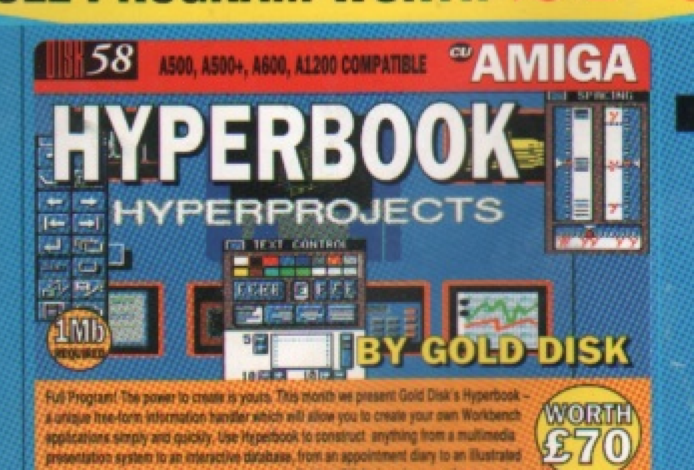
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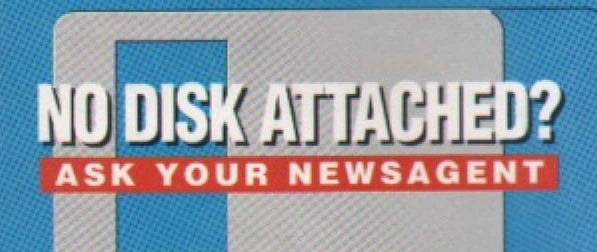
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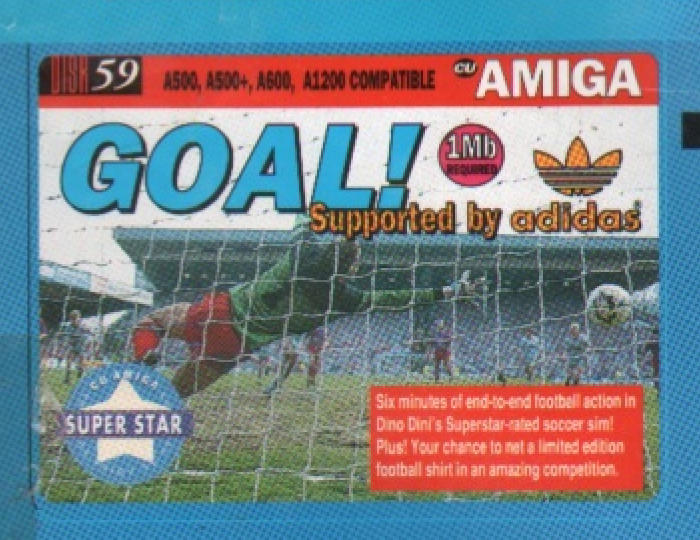
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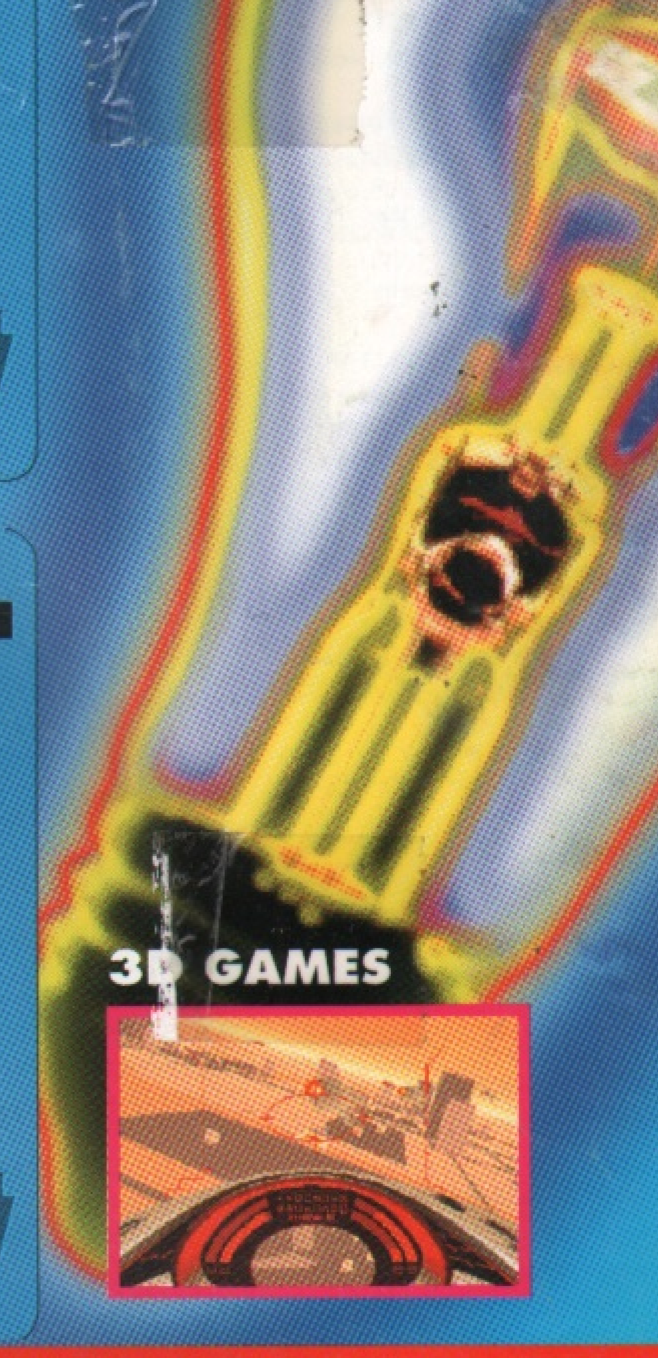






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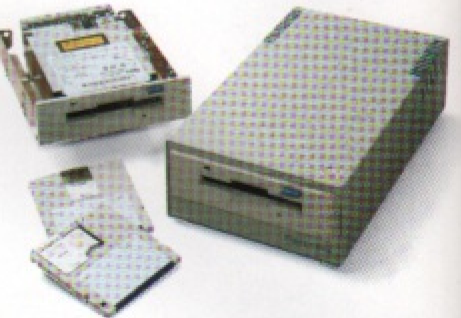
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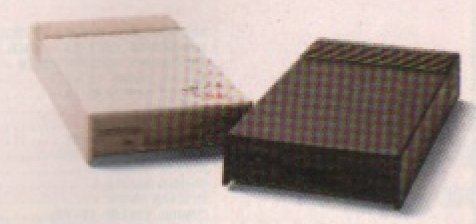
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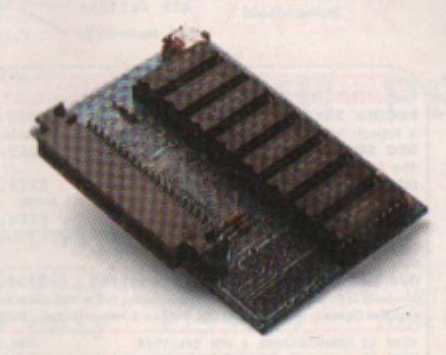
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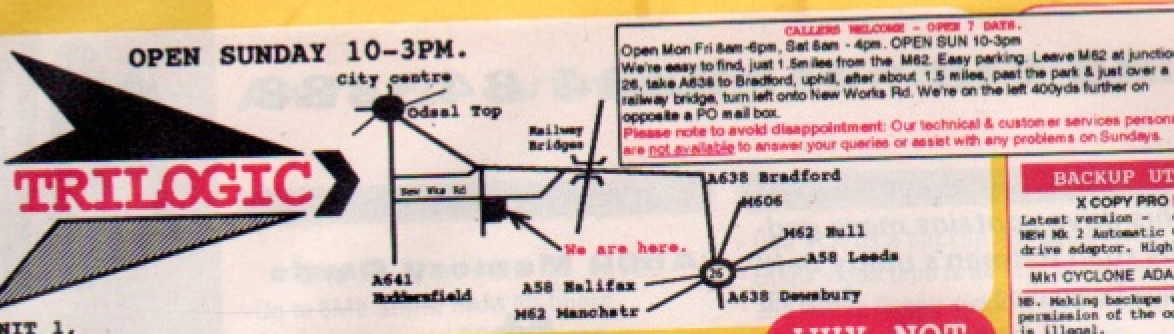


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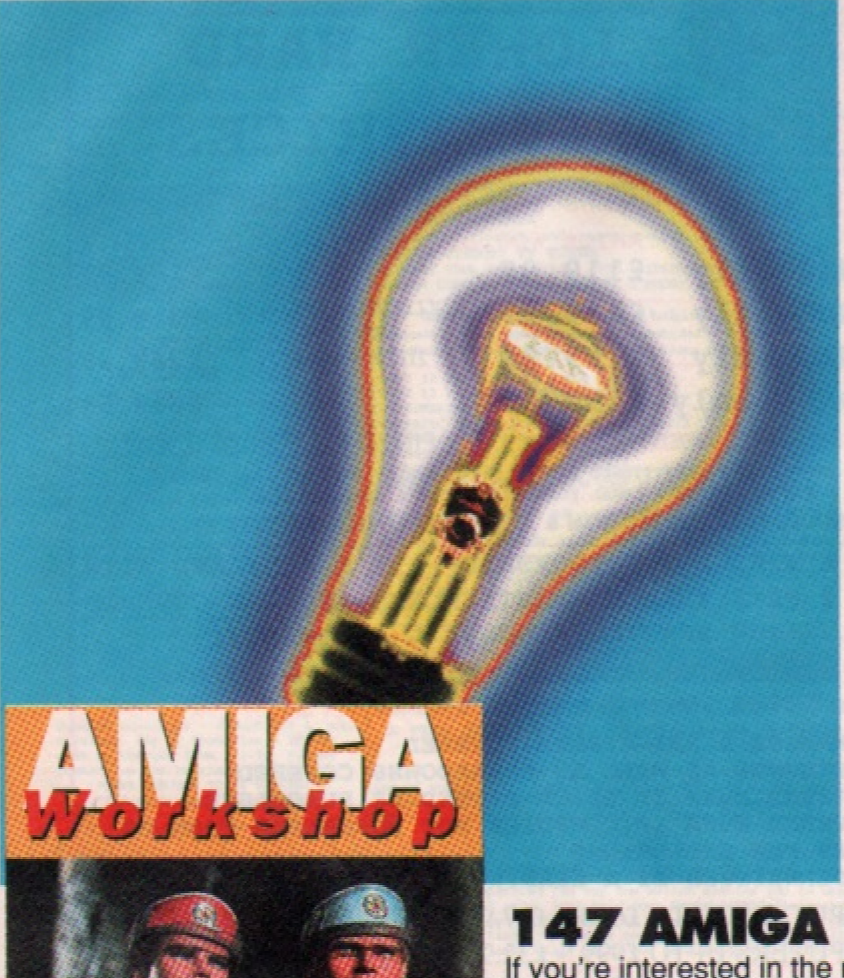
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CU AMIGA

CONTENTS



28 BRIGHT SPARKS

It is many an Amiga user's dream to make a living from the machine we all love, but few actually achieve it. This month we profile some of those success stories.

Come behind the scenes with CU AMIGA as we chart the rise of these Amiga maestros. Read how these people have used the Amiga to touch many aspects of our lives. From special effects on top TV shows to training London Underground drivers, the Amiga's influence has spread far and wide.

Find out what you need to turn your favourite machine into a money spinner. Do you have what it takes to be a success?

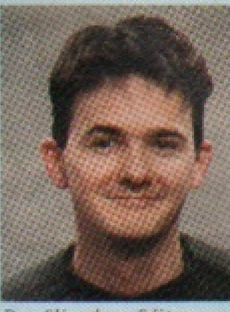
147 AMIGA WORKSHOP

If you're interested in the more serious side of the Amiga, then this is the place for you. Each month our team of experts detail how to get the most out of your machine and the many and varied software packages that exist to help you do just that. In this issue we expand upon our review coverage to take a peek at some of the Amiga guide videos available, and DIY continues with instructions on how to build your own stereo sampler. Plus, Peter Lee explains how to use *DPaint* as a word processor and DTP package, and Nick Veitch guides you round some of Workbench's hidden features.

REGULARS

OFF THE CUFF

EDITORIAL


Dan Slingsby – Editor

Nothing stands still for long in the world of computers. Only 10 months after Kelly Sumner assumed control of Commodore UK, he's packed his bags and joined GameTek, a US-based software company. Taking his place in the UK's number one computing hot seat is Commodore veteran, David Pleasance, who has been with the company for more than 10 years. We've got an exclusive interview starting on page 110.

Other big news this month includes the long-awaited trade in deal for the A1200. Yes, that's right, those of you with aging A500s will now be able to exchange your machine for a £100 discount on the RRP of a brand spanking new A1200 (see this month's news section for further details). Now you've really got no excuse to miss out on Commodore's 32-bit dream machine – and just to show you how good the machine is, we've commissioned a special 48-page A1200 guide and attached it to this issue's cover. If, by any chance, yours has come detached, merely send us the bar code from the front of the mag and we'll send you a replacement copy by return of post..

Impressed? You certainly will be, as news also reaches us this month of Commodore's experiments in FMV (Full Motion Video) which may lead to the world's first viable CD movie player. While the team were down at Commodore's Maidenhead HQ recently, we were treated to *Terminator 2* running off an A4000. Try doing that on your Apple Mac or IBM PC!

As you can guess, it's been an exciting month for the Amiga in general and I hope you'll share my enthusiasm for the future of everyone's favourite home computer. See you next month.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 19TH JUNE

EDITOR Dan Slingsby **DEPUTY EDITOR** Jonathan Sloan **TECHNICAL EDITOR** Nick Veitch **PRODUCTION EDITOR** Heather Turley **STAFF WRITER** Tony Horgan **GROUP ART EDITOR** Gordon Barrick **TECHNICAL ADVISORS** Mat Broomfield & John Kennedy **DISK COMPILER** Kenny Grant **DESIGNER** Jo Winslow **GROUP AD MANAGER** Nigel Taylor **SCANNING** Sara Pruce **AD MANAGER** Sean Collings **SALES EXECUTIVE** Chris Perera **AD PRODUCTION** Tina Gynn, Robin Ryan **MANAGING EDITOR** Steve James **PUBLISHER** Garry Williams

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GET SERIOUS

PRODUCTIVITY REVIEWS PRODUCTIVITY REVIEW

This month has seen many changes in the world of Commodore. Find out what the future has in store as we talk turkey with their new MD, David Pleasance, on page 110. Is your printer letting you down? Want to know which one to buy? Don't be left in the dark, follow our guide to the best printers available – a whopping nine-page round-up starts on page 114. Fancy creating your own slideshow? Check out our review of Vidi 12 on page 90. Just look here for the best serious software coverage around.



Enhance your Amiga's bass and treble output with this little box. There are some frequencies that a basic Amiga can't handle, the Sound Enhancer plugs this gap. But is it any good? Find out on page 92.

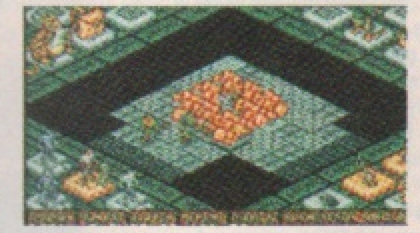


Rombo's Vidi 12 digitiser now incorporates full AGA support. Mat Broomfield investigates on page 90.

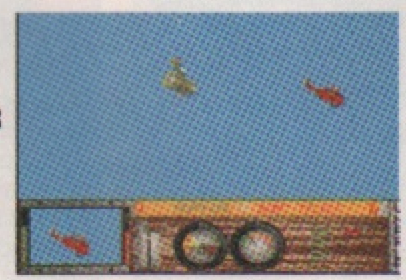
SCREEN SCENE

GAME REVIEWS GAME REVIEWS GAME REVIEWS

We'd travel to the ends of the Earth, well Runcorn at least, to bring you the best Amiga stories. This month Tone and Jon visit DID, the million pound developers, to quiz them on their new 3D games. Also covered are the brilliant follow-up to *Legend* and the latest platform puzzler, *The Lost Vikings*.



Will *Legend – Son of the Empire* live up to its name? Jon Sloan gets to grips with spell casting on page 50.



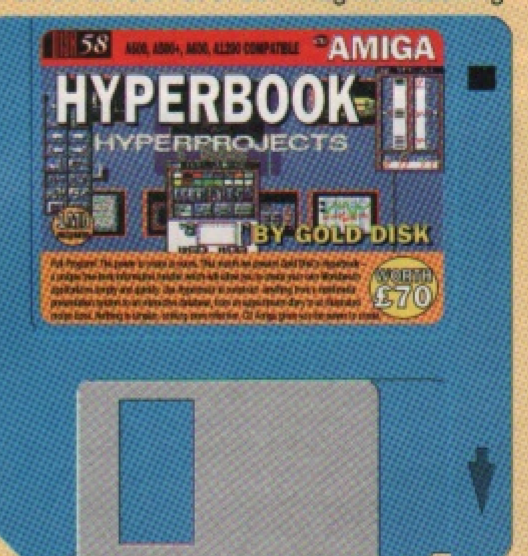
Grab your joysticks and take to the skies with Microprose's new strategy/flight sim on page 52.

COVERDISKS

Yet again CU AMIGA comes up with the goods. Not only have we got an exclusive demo of Dino Dini's *Goal!*, including a fantastic competition, there's also Hyperbook, the amazing free-form personal information manager. These disks are hot. Handle with care.

DISK 58 **PAGE 16**

The best just got better! Gold Disk's *Hyperbook* is the best free-form personal information manager available and it's ALL on this month's disk. Have you ever bought a database or word processor or graphics program only to find that it didn't do quite what you wanted? Well, *Hyperbook* combines all these and more and, best of all, you can tailor its functions exactly to your needs. This program allows you to write text in multiple fonts, import and size IFF files, add structured graphics then display them all on screen at once. Imagine attaching actions to these objects so that one click will run an ARexx progam, or execute a DOS command, then add sophisticated data management capabilties and you'll soon begin to understand *Hyperbook's* potential.



DISK 59 **PAGE 21**

You've read the review now play the game. The most eagerly awaited footy game is here – Dino Dini's *Goal!* And what a special disk it is too. Not only do you get to play up to six minutes of fast paced footy action but you'll also have a chance to win one of 11 exclusive Arsenal team shirts. You're going to need a lot of skill if you want to win one of those shirts though as *Goal!* features some of the toughest play this side of the Italian League. This game's realism is the one thing that sets it apart from the many pretenders to the crown. Players speed up and slow down, dribble with precision, and are so intelligent that they've got their own university degrees! On top of that there's the zoom mode to get really close to the action and the special throw-in/corner control which allows you to position the ball where you want it. Enough of this waffle – play on!!



CU NEWS

A1200 TRADE-IN DEAL ANNOUNCED



The bargain of the century has just been announced by Commodore. With sales of the oustandingly excellent A1200 exceeding the 100,000 mark, those kind chaps at CBM HQ are now giving everybody an easy way to upgrade. Owners of an A500 or A500+ in full working order and complete with power supply can return it to their local shop in return for a full £100 off a brand spanking new A1200. The offer is sure to be popular with the U.K.'s 1.5 million Amiga owners, as this will be the only way of upgrading to the new AGA architecture with its enhanced display modes and 24-bit palette.

AMIGA GETS T2 COIN-OP

Fruits of the rumoured Acclaim/Virgin deal look likely to be borne out with the Amiga conversion of the *Terminator 2* coin-op. Acclaim own the home-formats publishing rights to the hugely popular arcade machine, and sources have suggested that Virgin have snapped up the Amiga rights from them. If the rumours are true, you can expect to see it on the shelves in time for Christmas 93.



A600 PRICE SHOCK!

The big news of the month is a big drop in the price of the A600. It has been dropped a staggering £100 to the bargain price of only £199.99. The move is part of a general restructuring of the Amiga range, which started with the introduction of the A1200. The new price-tag is seen by David Pleasance of Commodore as a 'realistic entry level price'.
The drop will also have a follow-on effect to the A600 bundles. The Weird, Wild & Wicked pack will now retail at £229.99 and the Epic pack, which includes the hard-drive version of the A600 will be selling as low as £349.99. The prices will be in effect everywhere by the time you read this, so now you know what to get that difficult uncle for his birth-



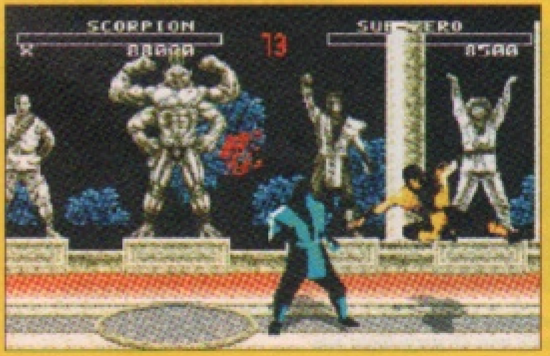
MORTAL KOMBAT

Williams's top arcade game is about to make an appearance on the Amiga. *Mortal Kombat*, the street fighting game to rival all street fighting games, is currently being coded here in the UK by top development team Probe Software, the name behind *Alien 3* and *Supremacy*, so it looks like we're in for a treat. This could be one of the top games of 1993.

Mortal Kombat has taken the arcades by storm both here and in the US. It's based on a travel-around-the-world-meeting-strange-new-people-and-kicking-the-c**p-out-of-them scenario, a bit like *Street Fighter II* really, and features some massive digitised graphics. The difference between this and *SFII* is that *Mortal Kombat* actually lives up to its name with each fight ending in some particularly gruesome death. For instance, one fighter's speciality is to rip the spinal column out of his opponent – yeuck!

The arcade machine has seven buttons as well as the joystick, so it remains to be seen how well Probe will convert this control method to a one button joystick. The Amiga version is set to appear in August so we'll have a full feature soon. For more details, ring Virgin on 081 960 2255.





FULL MOTION VIDEO SENSATION!

Many people thought that the V-Lab was the most cunning video frame grabber ever. Instead of grabbing separate red, green and blue frames as many other devices are wont to do, the V-Lab hardware grabs the complete composite signal and then decodes it later in the comfort of its own RAM. This enables the unit to grab more quickly and also gives a better quality image.

The big news is that the new version of the software is capable of grabbing 'real-time' sequences – it can capture every single frame from a video sequence. This has of course been possible before. All you need is a video playback unit capable of producing a stable, single frame image and which can advance a frame at a time. Unfortunately such units are rare, and indeed very expensive. The new V-Lab will work with an ordinary playback unit. Instead of pausing the image the software grabs as many as it can from a moving sequence. Then the sequence is rewound and begun again. This time the software decodes the frame sync signals and only tries to grab the frames it hasn't got already. In practise this means that three or four passes of the tape result in a fairly representative sequence (of course you can keep playing back as many times as it takes, and you can also use slow mode if your deck supports it). Expect a full review soon in your super soaraway CU, or in the meantime you can contact Amiga Centre Scotland on 089 687 583.

The other part of the potential world-storming combination is the software which can replay compressed files. Commodore and MacroSystem publicly demonstrated a system which could replay a 16-bit true colour image at a realistic frame rate of what looked to be approaching 25 frames a second. The Amiga setup this was running on did include a very large amount of memory and a fast hard-drive. The overall object though is to increase the decompression speed to make a conventional CD-based video player possible.



PHONE PAK "SOON"

Delays in GVP's phone pak system, originally mentioned in CU's June '92 issue, have been put down to minor incompatibilities with the BT system. Apparently although the software and hardware functioned perfectly, telephones connected to the system would not ring properly. This 'added feature' has now been rectified and the first units should begin shipping by the time you read this. Why not call Silica on 081 309 1111 to find out (assuming their phones are working).

DSS8+ CLEARLY SUPERIOR

The latest version of the popularly acclaimed DSS8 sampler is on its way from GVP. When first launched, punters and sad music journalists raved about the quality of the hardware – well now you'll be able to see what you are buying too. The new design for the sampler includes a new crystal case so you can see all the little sampling pixies at work. What is perhaps more important is that the software has been updated, so not only is the box clearer, but the samples will be too. You can sound out the DSS8+ by calling Silica on 081 309 1111.

EDITOR IN GAME TIPS SHOCK

Our very own Editor, Dan Slingsby, has just put the finishing touches to a massive hints and cheats book for the Amiga, entitled the Amiga Gamer's Guide. [So now we know what you were doing all those lunchtimes Dan.]

Released through Bruce Smith Books, who're best known for their more technical offerings, it aims to give Amiga gamers a chance to complete most of the top games that've appeared in the past two years. As well as comprehensive guides to such games as *Shadow of the Beast, Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* and *Putty* it includes tips and cheats for other classics, such as *Street Fighter II* and *Robocod.*

Games are becoming ever more difficult, always setting new standards in gameplay, as well as introducing better graphics and sound effects. With this improved sophistication comes an ever increasing level of difficulty. In recognition of this Dan decided to help gamers the only way he knows how – tell them how to cheat! This A to Z of cheats covers over 300 games and is only the first Volume! It's believed that Dan will be retiring his Editorship of CU AMIGA soon to become a full-time media star – allegedly. Dan will also be available for book signings, supermarket openings and bar mitzvahs, contact him at the usual address.

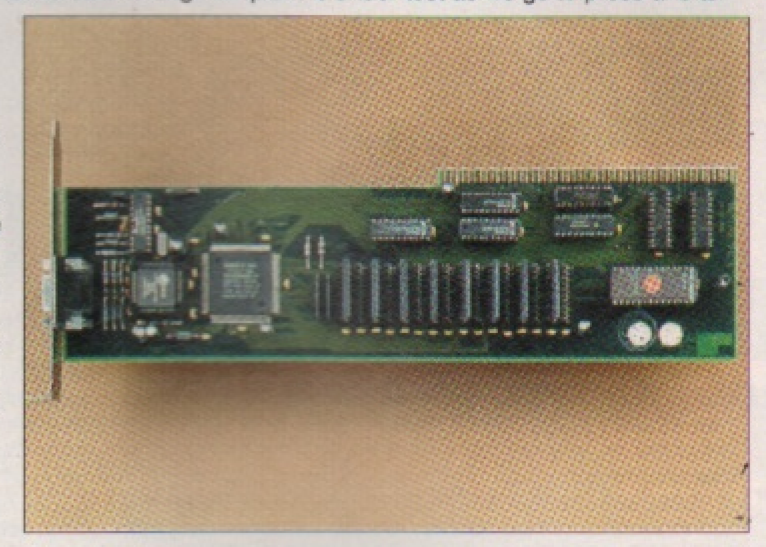
The Amiga Gamer's Guide can be purchased from most good book stores. Alternatively contact Bruce Smith Books, PO Box 382, St Albans, Herts AL2 3JD. Tel: 0923 894355. Price £14.95.



EMPLANT AND RETINA JOINT VENTURE

Possibly one of the most important and surprising pieces of news to filter through to CU Towers is the possibility that MacroSystems excellent Retina card (reviewed in April) may be compatible with the revolutionary Emplant emulator.

A software driver which will run the Retina card through Emplant is under test as we go to press and all being well it will be reviewed in the next issue of CU. The implications, should the combo work well together, are that an Amiga/Retina/Emplant configuration could easily outpower a similarly priced Mac system. Previously Mac emulators have worked well with the Apple system software and applications, but have lacked the capability of driving a 24-bit display. Nobody wants to emulate a Mac just so they can use word-pros and spreadsheets – the only reason to emulate a Mac is to run applications like Photoshop and Quark – both of which are pretty useless without a good display.



ICD VIPER TO BITE IN JUNE

Following in the footsteps of virtually every other hardware manufacturer, ICD have announced an upcoming expansion for the Amiga 1200.

The Viper 1230 is a number of expansions in one though. The basic configuration of the board will be an '030 running at 40MHz with an optional 68882 maths coprocessor and a real time battery backed clock.

Extra Ram will be available through a SIMM slot on the board which will accept standard 32-bit modules of up to 64Mb – more than enough for most applications.

Perhaps the most important feature is the further expansion capability offered by the Viper DMA port. This is cunningly situated so that further expansion devices can be plugged in from the rear 'expansion' slot on the A1200 and connect into the main Viper board in the trapdoor. One of the first expansions to be released will be a SCSI-2 controller, which will allow very high speed (up to 10Mb/second) data communication with SCSI and SCSI-2 devices. There will be an internal socket to allow an internal 2.5 inch SCSI drive to be used, though this could be a significant drain on power. Other interfaces are planned for the future.

ICD plans to distribute the Viper in the UK through Power Computing who are on 0234 843388.

BATTLE ISLE 93

Strategists haven't had too much to shout about recently, but *Battle Isle 93* could change all that. A continuation of the original *Battle Isle* saga, it pits you against the Skynet-Titan corporation. The coveted mineral aldinium is becoming a rarity, and an alternative energy source must be found if your race is to survive. The robot hoards of the Skynet-Titans are intent on using your research to strengthen their empire and destroy your people. The upshot is a brain-taxing series of battles against the computer or a human opponent. To add a fresh dimension to the proceedings the action has now been transferred to the moon, complete with moonbases, lava flows(?!) and all manner of new military weapons and hardware. *Battle Isle 93* is due for release in mid-June, priced at £25.95. Contact Kompart UK for more details on 0727 868005.





CU ROADSHOW

All aboard! This summer the CU crew are packing up all their gear in an extremely old Ford transit van, and travelling the length and breadth of the country giving demonstrations of all the latest Amiga hardware and software. So, if you teach an Information Technology course or run a computer club, why not invite us around to show you what the Amiga is really capable of?! If you're interested, give Dan a ring on 071 972 6700, ext. 2421.

»

POWER INTO HIGH DENSITY



The most interesting product to be launched recently, at least from the point of view of the average Amiga owner, is the Power XL external floppy drive. This unit has a high density mechanism which allows the use of those funny floppy disks with silver letters on.

Essentially they have twice the capacity of a normal double-density disk (2Mb unformatted, 1.76 Mb in AmigaDos format). The drive can also be used in conjunction with *CrossDos* to provide access to 1.44Mb PC disks.

A simple program installs a software patch onto your normal boot-up disk which allows you to read, write and format HD disks on any version of Workbench from 2.0 up. There is no tricky hardware modification to be made, no chips to be swapped – all you have to do is plug the drive into the existing chain.

Now you too can swap disks with your A4000 owning friends and impress them with the fact that your High Density drive actually goes a bit faster than theirs. Perhaps the most amazing feature of this drive is its low price of £129.

In order to celebrate the launch of this product, Power computing are offering an amazing 5% discount on all their products. Simply look up the amazing bargains in the Power Computing advertisements in this issue and include this coupon with your order or call 0234 843388.

5% OFF!!

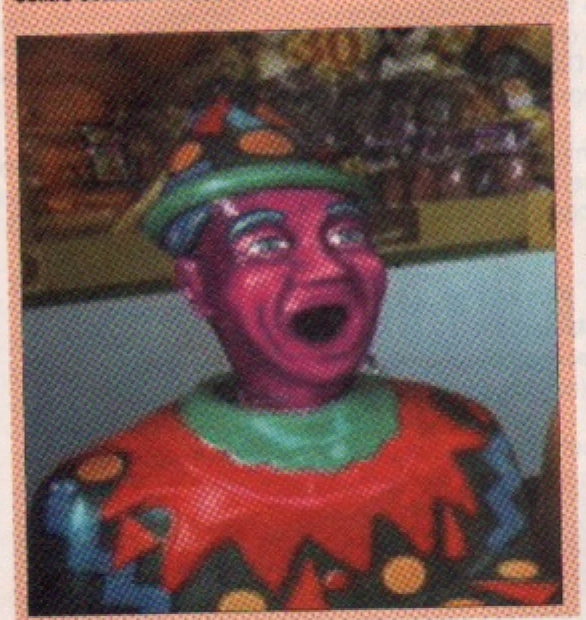
This coupon entitles a CU reader an amazing 5% discount on the complete range of Power Computing products for the Amiga. Check out the ads on pages 2,3 and 103 and be sure to include this coupon with your orde

MORE COLOURFUL HARLEQUIN

Amiga Centre Scotland have anounced an update to the popular Harlequin 24-bit graphics card. The new version sports a new Rendac graphics controller which allows greater flexibility of video modes, and new improved circuitry which presents a more stable image.

Although the 24-bit output from the original Harlequin was broadcast quality, the new improved version features an even better signal. One of the advantages of having a perfectly formed sync is that a PAL display appears to be more stable to the eye.

Other improvements include a new pixel-mapped overlay feature and beefed up alpha channel support. Expect a review very soon, but in the meantime you can call Amiga Centre Scotland on 089 687 583.

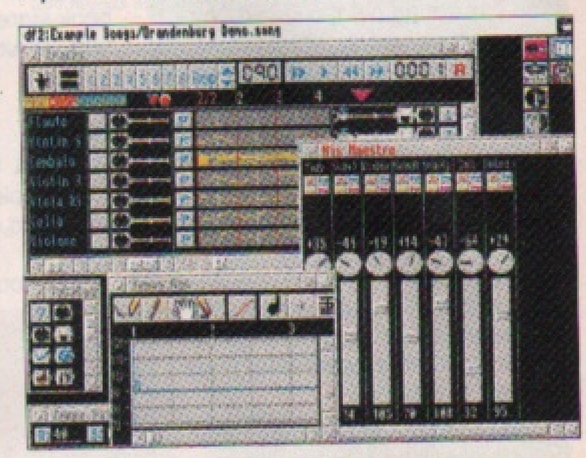


PAGE REDUCTIONS AT MERIDIAN

In a special summer madness sale, and for a limited time only, Meridian Distribution are offering the acclaimed DTP package, Pagestream 2.2, for an unbelievably low £69 – almost half the recommended retail price. The offer is strictly limited, so order now to avoid disappointment on 081 543 3500.

Whilst on the subject of Meridian, we should point out that they are official distributors of Blue Ribbon Software and hence, of *Bars & Pipes Professional* reviewed last issue. In fact, Bars and Pipes will not be available at all from DMI, so don't ring them up as they'll only get upset. The price quoted was also incorrect, and should have been £299.95.

Meridian are also doing a special upgrade offer of £116.33 for owners of the original package. Technical support will be from a special *Bars & Pipes* number - 081 332 6959.



THE RETURN OF GUY SPY

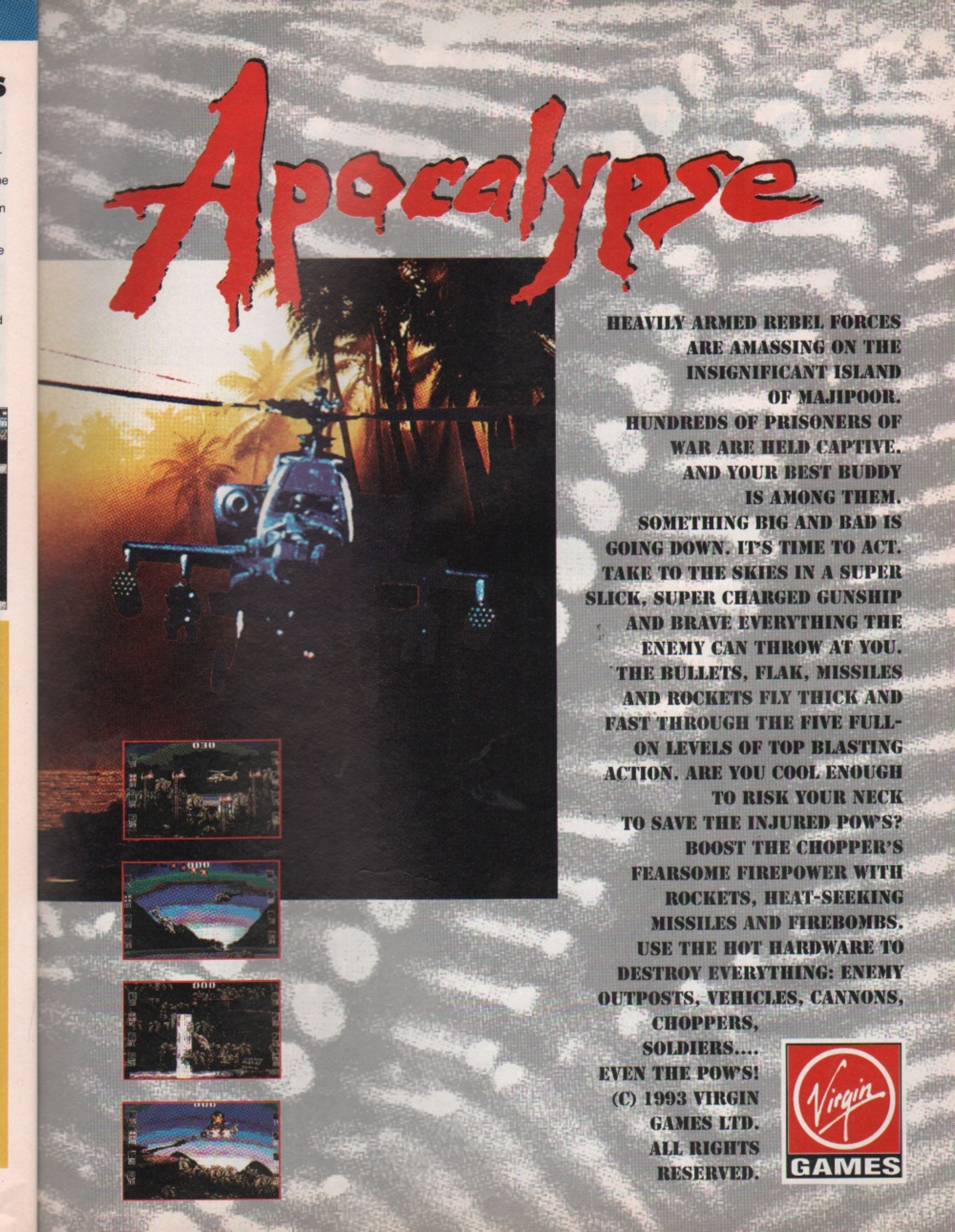
ReadySoft's famous super spy is set to make a come back to an Amiga near you. After defeating the evil Baron Von Max and saving the world from the terrible doomsday machine Guy took a well-deserved holiday. Unfortunately he didn't get to rest too long before the United Nations called him back into action.

This time he's underwater, in space and up against the cunning Captain Moray. Travelling in a nuclear submarine Guy must pit his wits against Moray's fleet of super powered subs capable of destroying most modern war machines. Despite every effort the evil madman still threatens world peace promising to destroy every nation's capital unless he's paid one trillion dollars. It's up to you to guide the point 'n' click hero through the Terror of the Deep in an attempt to destroy the orbiting laser satellite.

ReadySoft's expertise lies in these full-screen animated adventures with the *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace* games already well-established as Amiga classics. The main criticism of these earlier games was the lack of actual player involvement with it being limited to clicking on the correct part of the screen at the right time. ReadySoft believe that they've got that beat now and, for *Guy Spy 2*, they promise an increased player interaction and enhanced gameplay, as well as over 100 individual scenes incorporating 1200 frames of animation taking up over 20Mb of disk space. Considering the original *Guy Spy* was 5Mb and came on four disks can we expect *Terror of the Deep* to come on 12?

It's due for an October release,so we'll bring you more details as soon as we have them. For more information contact their distributors, Empire, on 0268 541126.




Apocalypse
HEAVILY ARMED REBEL FORCES ARE AMASSING ON THE INSIGNIFICANT ISLAND OF MAJIPOOR. HUNDREDS OF PRISONERS OF WAR ARE HELD CAPTIVE. AND YOUR BEST BUDDY IS AMONG THEM. SOMETHING BIG AND BAD IS GOING DOWN. IT'S TIME TO ACT. TAKE TO THE SKIES IN A SUPER SLICK, SUPER CHARGED GUNSHIP AND BRAVE EVERYTHING THE ENEMY CAN THROW AT YOU. THE BULLETS, FLAK, MISSILES AND ROCKETS FLY THICK AND FAST THROUGH THE FIVE FULL-ON LEVELS OF TOP BLASTING ACTION. ARE YOU COOL ENOUGH TO RISK YOUR NECK TO SAVE THE INJURED POW'S? BOOST THE CHOPPER'S FEARSOME FIREPOWER WITH ROCKETS, HEAT-SEEKING MISSILES AND FIREBOMBS. USE THE HOT HARDWARE TO DESTROY EVERYTHING: ENEMY OUTPOSTS, VEHICLES, CANNONS, CHOPPERS, SOLDIERS.... EVEN THE POW'S!
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Virgin
GAMES

AMIGA CHARTS TOP TEN

EA's *Desert Strike* hangs onto the coveted number one spot this month, although two Renegade titles are also in the running. *Sensible Soccer 92/92* is still selling well, enough to boost its position to number two in the charts, and the Bitmaps' *Chaos Engine* claims third place.



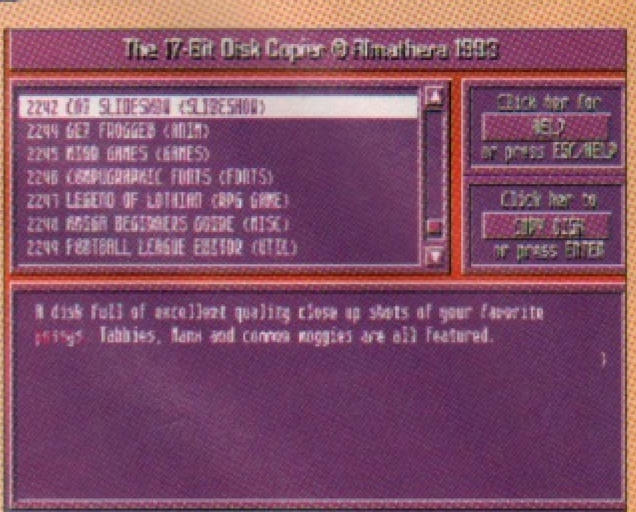
1. Desert Strike (Electronic Arts)
2. Sensible Soccer 92/93 (Renegade)
3. Chaos Engine (Renegade)
4. Lemmings 2 (Psygnosis)
5. Body Blows (Team 17)
6. B17 Flying Fortress (Microprose)
7. Reach for the Sky (Virgin)
8. Superfrog (Team 17)
9. Monkey Island 2 (US Gold)
10. History Line 1914/18 (Blue Byte)

17-BIT CUT CD

New from Almathera systems is a CDTV title for all PD fanatics to collect. In conjunction with 17-Bit, the well known PD supplier, they have produced what is, to the best of our knowledge, the first double-CD pack ever for the Amiga.

The compilation takes in all the best of PD, including games, demos, IFFs, music modules, samples, animations, applications and utilities. Over 1000Mb of data are available, selected from the cream of the 17-bit collection throughout the years (although none of Tony's demos appear – how strange).

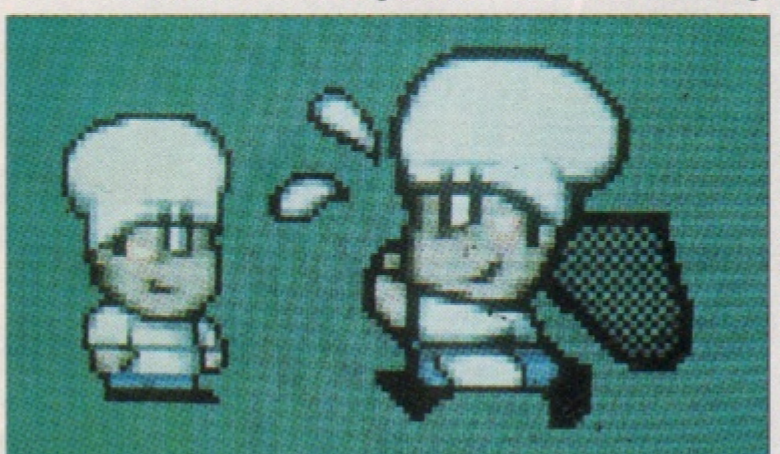
The discs are available now from your local stockist or direct from Almathera on 081 683 6418. The price is a non-contentious £39.95.



OUT TO LUNCH

There have been some unusual themes for games but Mindscape's up coming *Pierre Le Chef* takes the biscuit – literally. Pierre is a world renowned master chef capable of cooking up some incredible dishes. The only problem he has is that the ingredients often don't want to end up as a main course. If that wasn't enough he has an arch rival, Le Chef Noir, who is intent on ruining Pierre's reputation.

The aim of this game then is to guide Pierre around 48 challenging platform-based levels in an attempt to collect the ingredients he needs for his famous creations. At the same time he's got to fend off the unwanted attentions of various bugs and diseases, which like nothing better than a bit of fresh food, and keep Le Chef Noir away from his store room.



Set across 6 countries, each with its own distinctive theme revolving around their national dishes and music, this platformer is sure to please fans of the cute character genre. There'll be secret levels, unique power-ups and over 1000 frames of humorous character animations to keep you entertained.

Out to Lunch is scheduled for an October release. Contact Mindscape on 0444 246333 for more information.

MIDI MUSIC SHOW '93

The recent MIDI Music Show held at Wembley Conference Centre, London, was the UK launchpad for a number of new synths and samplers.

Akai's recent explosion of products was prominent, with their new S2800, S3000 and S3200 stereo samplers revealed to the public. Akai have dominated the UK MIDI sampler market for the past few years, but the top of the range S1100 was starting to look a bit dated. For the new models, Akai have sensibly decided that there's no point in increasing the 16-bit resolution of the sampling, and instead have concentrated on more practical improvements.

The S2800 (£2199) samples at 22.05kHz and 44.1kHz, is 32-voice polyphonic, and comes as standard with 2Mb of RAM, expandable to 16Mb. A fancy new feature is what Akai call APM (Assignable Program Modulation). This lets you assign various MIDI controllers to handle a sound's LFO rate, frequency cutoff, LFO depth, amplitude, pitch and pan. This means that you could, for example, open and close the filter with the modulation wheel as you played a sample. Combined with a sequencer, it could be very handy indeed. Echo, chorus, pitchshift and delay effects are also included.

One step up the ladder, the S3000 (£2999) comes with 2Mb of RAM, expandable to 32Mb, and builds on the specs of the S2800 with some major additions. There's a 105Mb hard drive, a SCSI interface, digital audio in and out connections, eight independently assignable analogue outputs, and a SMPTE reader/generator.

Ruling the roost is the S32000 (£3999), an 8Mb machine, expandable to 32Mb, which has provision for an optical-magneto drive as well as the internal hard drive. Hard disk recording is available (perfect for mastering CDs), there's an added reverb unit and also an extra LSI.

For further information, contact Akai UK on 081 897 6388.

Roland had some tempting new kit on display too, the strangest of which was their JD-990 (£1445). The JD-990 is a rack-mount version of the JD-800, a monster synth that's programmed with a mass of knobs and sliders. The control panel of the JD-800 is huge, and has been reduced to just another complex system of buttons, in order to fit it on the panel of the 2U high module. Although this is a great loss to anyone who wants to create new sounds of their own, the internal hardware is still the same, so it's still capable of producing the same epic pads, analogue-style basses, and acoustic samples, backed up by a couple of drum kits and a hefty effects section.

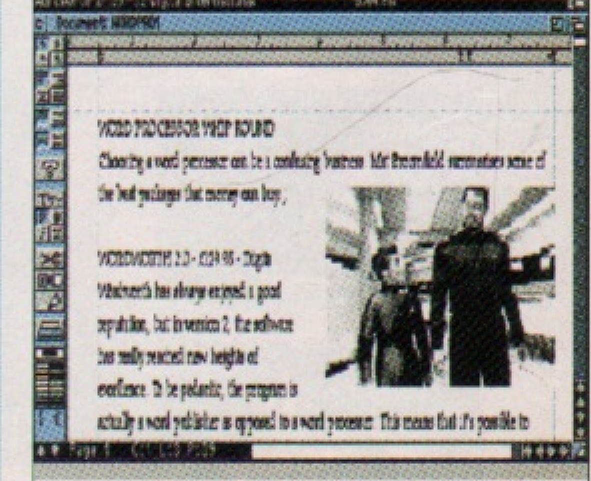
Also unveiled was the larger-than-life JV-1000 (£1859). Sporting a generous 76-note weighted keyboard, the 28-note polyphonic, 8-part multi-timbral JV-1000 is an all-in-one workstation. Internal sounds consist of 128 presets and 2 drum kits, with 64 user-definable patches and a programmable drum map. A 256K sequencer is built in, with both step and realtime recording. Sequences can be saved out via the 720K capacity 3.5 inch floppy drive. An extra 16-part multi-timbral GS synth board can be installed to boost the maximum polyphony to 56 voices.

For further information, contact Roland UK on 0252 816181.

WORDWORTH AND PANASONIC BUNDLE

A special version of *Wordworth* has been announced which will appear exclusively with Panasonic printers. The new version will provide extended support for the printer's on board range of fonts and for the printers themselves.

Jeremy Rihill of Digita claims 'Wordworth for the Panasonic has been extensively tailored to take full advantage of the wide range of built in fonts available with the Panasonic range.'



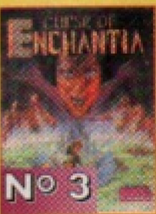
AMIGA SOFTWARE

Games marked NOP will not work on A500 Plus, A600 or A1200.
Games marked NO12 will not work on the A1200.

SPECIAL RESERVE TOP TEN AMIGA GAMES OF APRIL/MAY 1993


Nº 1 PREMIERE MGR 13.49

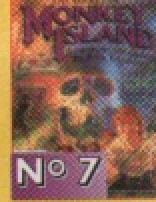

Nº 2 FORMULA 1 GP 14.99

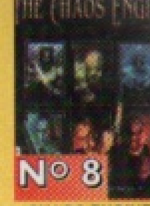

Nº 3 ENCHANTIA 12.99

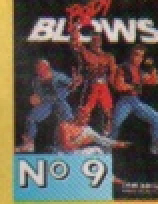

Nº 4 SENSIBLE SOCCER 16.99

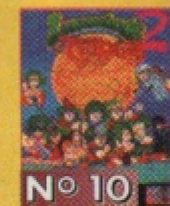

Nº 5 ZOOL 13.49


Nº 6 STREETFIGHTER 2 18.49

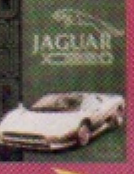

Nº 7 MONKEY ISLAND 13.49

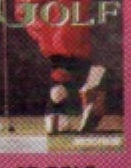

Nº 8 CHAOS ENGINE 16.99

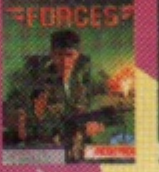

Nº 9 BODY BLOWS 16.49


Nº 10 LEMMINGS 2 19.99


SABRE TEAM 11.49

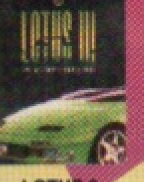

JAGUAR XJ220 10.99


3D GOLF 13.99


SPECIAL FORCES 13.99

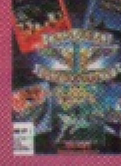

ROBOCOP 3 11.49


STUART PEARCE'S 12.99


LOTUS 3 13.49

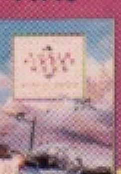

LEMMINGS 12.49

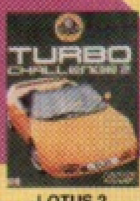

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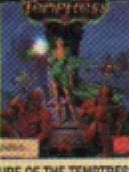

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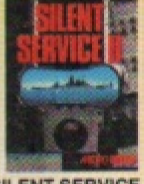

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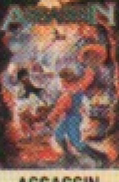

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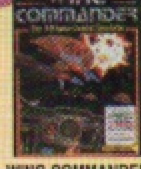

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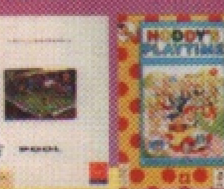

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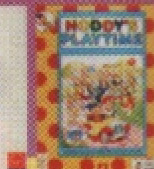

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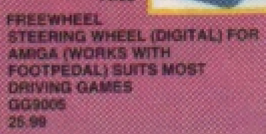
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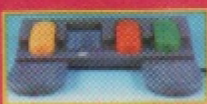


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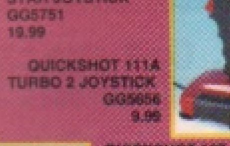


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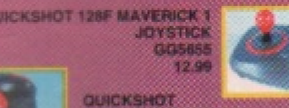
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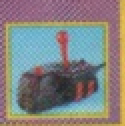
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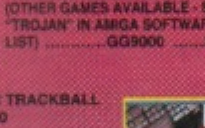


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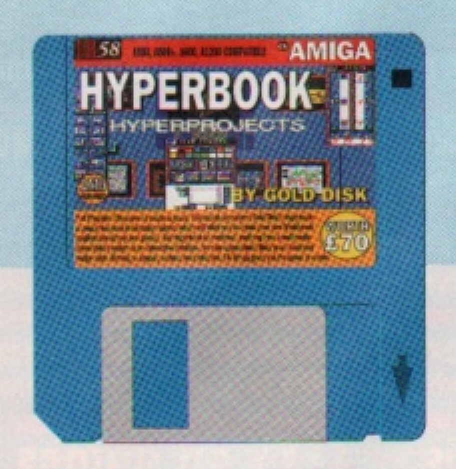
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COVERDISK 58



This month the amazing CU coverdisk is choc-full of *Hyperbook* – the definitive, easy to use hypermedia engine. Soon you'll be creating applications and storing data in a meaningful interactive way. Get cracking now...

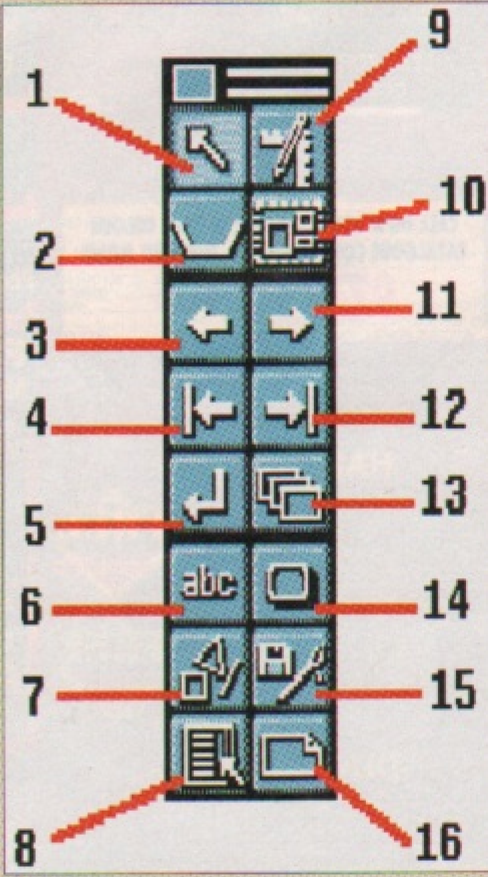
USING HYPERBOOK

Explore the fascinating world of computer aided training, interactive presentations and even multimedia with this month's coverdisk giveaway, *HyperBook*. Jason Holborn gets you started.

Unless you've been breaking rocks in darkest Siberia for the last few years or so, you cannot have helped but notice that 'multimedia' has become the latest buzzword on the lips of every computer user. The fact is, multimedia is big business and Commodore have been quick to jump on the bandwagon by badging their new Amiga 4000/030 as 'the multimedia workstation' (didn't they say that about the A3000?). Multimedia isn't just a single type of program though – it's more of a concept really. The basic idea is that the Amiga acts as a platform for presenting information in a variety of different formats using a common front end.

Multimedia has found uses for all sorts of applications ranging from POS (Point Of Sale), education, interactive presentations and training systems. What makes multimedia so special is that, unlike a book, it is fully interactive, so that instead of having to flick through the information held on the system one item at a time, you can quickly and easily access the information that you want, skipping past the stuff you're not interested in. »

THE HYPERBOOK TOOLBOX





HyperBook's Bin tool provides you with a temporary storage area for objects.

Most of the tools that you'll need to create a *HyperBook* stack can be found in a rather unobtrusive little toolbox window that is automatically displayed whenever you load *HyperBook*. This window contains 16 tools which form the basic building blocks of all *HyperBook* stacks. Read on to find out what they do and how they are used.

1. READER TOOL

The Reader tool allows you to actually try out your *HyperBook* stack as if it were being run by the *HyperReader* utility. Whenever you click on a button (or indeed any object), the action associated with that object will be performed. This is the default tool.

2. BIN TOOL

Unlike the Workbench Trashcan, the *HyperBook* bin acts as a sort of temporary storage area for objects, allowing you to remove an object from a *HyperBook* page without it being deleted entirely. If you decide that you would like to use it again at a later date, it can be transferred back to the current page at its original position.

When you click on this tool, *HyperBook* opens up a Bin Window. If you then move the mouse pointer around the page, each and every object will be highlighted as the mouse pointer moves over it. To transfer an object, simply click on the object in question and a tiny representation of the object will be placed into the Bin window and the original removed. If you decide that you would like to use it again at a later date, it can be transferred back to the current page at its original position simply by clicking on its icon in the Bin window.

3. PREVIOUS PAGE

The Previous Page tool provides a quick and easy method of flicking backwards through a *HyperBook* stack. When you click on this gadget, *HyperBook* moves back a page. If you were currently working on the third page within a stack, clicking on this gadget would take you back to the second page.

4. FIRST PAGE

Although the previous page gadget can be used to take you back to the first page within a stack, this can take time if your stack contains more than a couple of pages. If you need to go back to the first page, a single click on this tool is all that is needed.

5. MOVE BACK

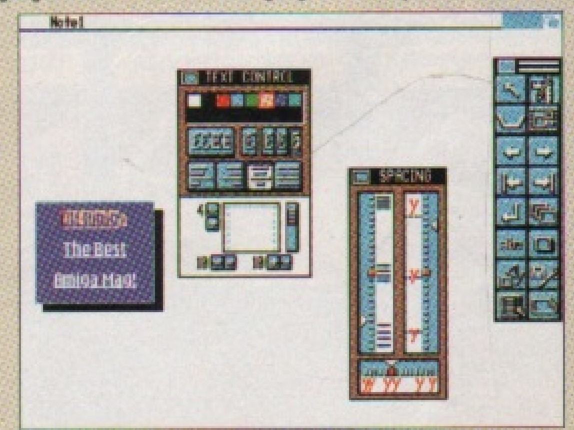
Although you might think that this is the same as the Previous Page tool, the Move Back tool doesn't simply take you back to the next logical page (from page three to page two, for example). Instead, Move Back takes you back to the page where you last were, not necessarily the last numerical page.

For example, if you were on page 10 and you clicked on a button that took you to page two, clicking on this tool would send you back to page 10 again. *HyperBook* keeps track of the last 50 pages that have been displayed, so this option provides a very handy method of backtracking through a stack.

6. CREATE NOTE

The Create Note tool is used to define a labelled box object. To use it, simply click on the Create Note tool and then drag out a box of the size required. Once you release the left mouse button, the box will be placed onto the page and a flashing cursor will appear in the top left-hand corner of the box. You can now type in a label for the box.

HyperBook also gives you a fairly comprehensive selection of tools that allow you to fine-tune the look of the text within the button. Once you've defined the size of the box, you'll notice two small 'iconified' window bars at the top of the screen labelled 'Text Control' and 'Spacing'. By default, you can't actually see these windows in all their glory as they are what the techies would call 'iconified' (which essentially means 'shrunk'). To bring them into view, click on their close gadgets. The top half of the Text



HyperBook's 'Create Note' tool gives you extensive control over both the appearance and spacing of text.

YOUR QUICKSTART GUIDE TO LOADING DISK 58

There is nothing terribly difficult about using this month's disk. Just follow these instructions.
1. To begin with always turn your Amiga off and leave it for about 15-20 seconds before turning the power back on again. This helps protect against virus infection.
2. Whilst you are waiting, write protect your disk. To do this move the plastic guard on the back of the disk to block off the hole.
3. Turn on the machine and wait for the Workbench prompt. Insert the coverdisk and wait while it boots up.
4. Double click on the Hyperbook icon and wait while the disk is accessed. When prompted, insert a blank disk and press return.
5. When the operation is finished, replace the coverdisk.
6. Repeat steps 4&5 for the Samples disk.
7. Turn the machine off, wait 15 seconds and power up again. Insert the first Hyperbook disk and off you go.

IF YOUR DISK WON'T LOAD

If your coverdisk doesn't seem to work as it should, then follow this simple guideline. Firstly, remove all unnecessary peripherals, such as printers, modems etc. Follow the instructions on these pages to the letter, and if after that you find that the disk still doesn't work call the PC wise hotline for advice on 0685 350505. The line is open between 1030 and 1230 Monday to Friday. If they advise you that the disk is faulty then pop it in an envelope with a covering letter explaining what the problem is to: CU DISK RETURNS, PC WISE, DOWLAIS TOP BUSINESS PARK, MERTHYR TYDFIL, MID-GLAMORGAN, CF46 2YY. Please include 28 pence per disk to cover postage and packing (55 pence for overseas readers). Your disk will be tested and a new, working one dispatched to you as soon as possible.

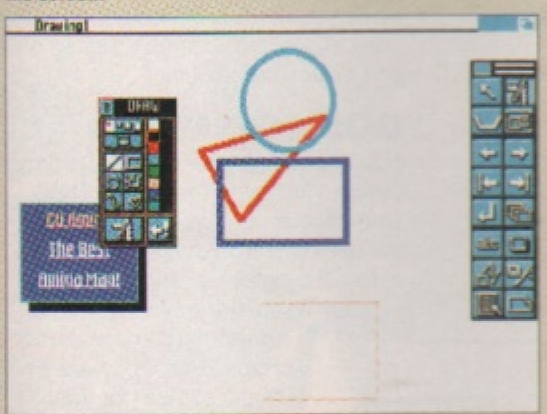
Please note that neither we nor PC Wise can accept responsibility for any disks damaged due to negligence on the part of the user.

control window allows you to set the type of font used, its colour, style and justification. Below this are a set of gadgets that control the text margins within the box.

The Spacing window offers more precise DTP-like control over the individual spacing of characters, line spacing and the baseline setting. These come in particularly useful when you need to alter the spacing characteristics of text to give a much better fit.

7. CREATE DRAWING

If a straight box or list object isn't quite up to scratch, then the Create Drawing tool can be used to literally draw an object of any shape using *HyperBook*'s structured drawing tools. When you click on this tool, a 'Draw' window will appear containing a selection of *DPaint*-like drawing tools including all the usual line, box, circle, freehand and polygon options. Although each individual component (a circle or line, for example) must be drawn separately, *HyperBook* automatically merges them together to form a single object. Each component can have its own colour and can be repositioned anywhere on the screen.



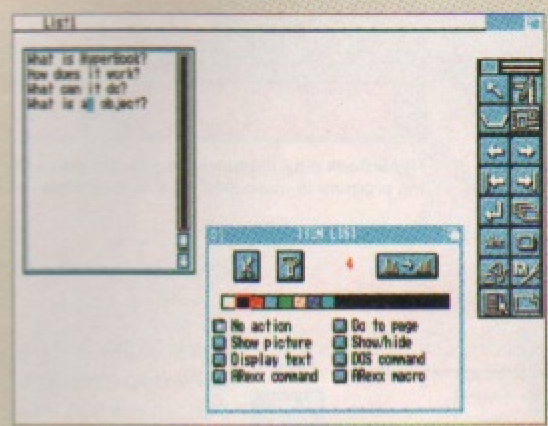
Objects of any shape and size can be produced using *HyperBook*'s drawing tool.

Be careful with this option though – because *HyperBook* automatically groups components together once your drawing is complete, any part of the drawing that overlaps an existing object will obscure that part of the object making it impossible to select. Keep your drawings confined to their own part of the screen and you'll avoid such problems.

8. CREATE LIST

One of the most powerful object types offered by *HyperBook* is the List object which can contain a whole list of words, each of which can perform a different operation. Say, for example, you were creating an interactive training system for computer users. You could use the list tool to give the user a list of the topics on offer.

Like the Create Note tool, the first thing you must do once you've selected the Create



An item list object can contain literally hundreds of different entries, each of which can have a different action attached to it.

List option is to drag out a list window of the size required. List windows are a bit like the directory listing windows that you get on a file requester – the larger the window, the more 'entries' you can display at once. You're not just restricted to the maximum number of entries that can be displayed onscreen at once though – a list can contain literally hundreds of entries which can be accessed simply by scrolling backwards and forwards through the list using the scroll gadgets that are automatically attatched to the right hand side of the list window.

Once you've set the size of the window, a cursor will appear inside the window on the top line. Each line of text that you enter is treated as a completely separate object in its own right which can perform its own individual operation. The list tools window provides you with three extra gadgets that allow you to cut and paste entries and sort them into alphabetical order.

9. EDIT OBJECT

If, after defining an object, you're not entirely happy with either its appearance or how it works, *HyperBook*'s Edit Object tool can be used to alter any aspect of the object in question. To use it, simply click on the Edit Object tool and then move the mouse pointer over the object that you wish to edit and then press the left mouse button.

At this point a number of Workbench-like gadgets will be overlaid on top of the object that allow you to either delete the object (click on the close gadget), move it (the drag bar), rearrange it (window to back/window to front) or resize it (the resize gadget at the bottom right-hand corner of the window).

If you'd like to alter the appearance of the object, click the left mouse button again and the editing tools associated with that particular type of object will be displayed. If you wish to alter the action attatched to the object, click the right mouse button.

10. GROUP OBJECTS

Not surprisingly, the Group Objects tool is used to group several objects together so that they act as a single object. Once grouped, all the objects will perform the same action when the user clicks on them. To group several objects, click on this tool and then drag out a selection box around the objects in question.

11. NEXT PAGE

The Next Page option works exactly the same as the Previous Page option but instead of going back one page, the Next Page option takes you forward one page (strangely enough).

12. LAST PAGE

The opposite to the First page option is – not surprisingly – the Last Page option that is used to immediately take you to the last page in your *HyperBook* stack.

13. CONTENTS

Clicking on the contents option gives you instant access to any of the pages within your stack. When you click on this option, *HyperBook* will display a list of all the pages currently available – just click on the page you want and *HyperBook* will automatically switch to that page.

14. CREATE BUTTON

The Create Button is very similar to the Create Note tool except for the fact that it does not allow you to enter a label for the button that you create – all you can do is to alter the appearance of the button and then assign an action to it. To use it, click on the tool and then drag out a rectangle of the size required. When you release the left mouse button, the Action requestor will pop up allowing you to modify the button's appearance and to assign an action to it (more on this later).

15. CUT GRAPHIC

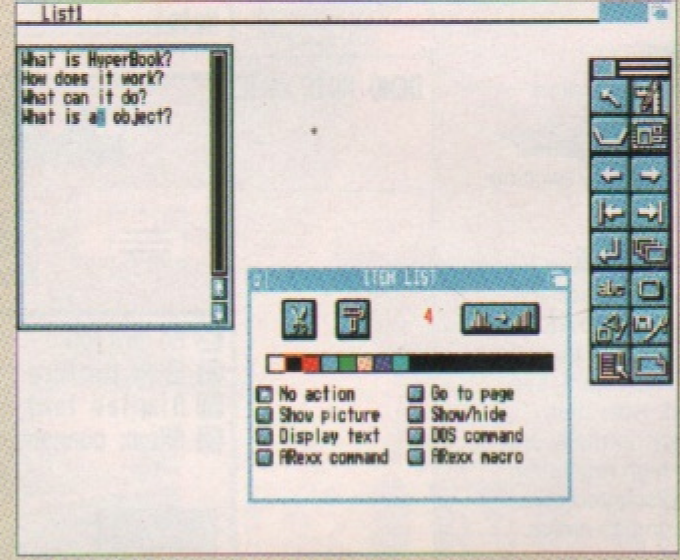
The Cut Graphic is potentially the most attractive form of object tool on offer as it allows you to cut out a rectangular section from any IFF picture (although medium or high resolution images with no more than 16 colours are best) for use as a button. When you click on this tool, a file requester will be displayed allowing you to select the IFF picture that you wish to cut the graphic from. Once you've selected a picture, it will be loaded into a separate screen. You can then select the area that you wish to use as an object by dragging out a rectangle around it. Once you're happy with it, click on the tick symbol and *HyperBook* will transfer it to the current page as a brush which can be moved around the screen and then pasted down by clicking on the left mouse button.

By default, *HyperBook* displays a graphic as a monochrome image but it can be forced to attempt to display the image in full colour by clicking on the small gadget immediately to the left of the colour palette selector within the Action requester. To access this, select 'Edit Object, click on the graphic and then click the right mouse button.

16. CREATE PAGE

The Create Page tool allows you to add a brand new page to your *HyperBook* stack. When you select this option, a requestor appears that allows you to set the name of the page, the number of colours it uses, its resolution (medium or high resolution), the page transition and you can even pull in a background graphic cut from an IFF picture. Note that this last option automatically pulls in the picture's palette, so graphics look considerably closer to the original IFF.

It is also possible to create a 'master' or default page for creating large stacks of pages.



Even pictures can be loaded into *HyperBook* and used as objects!

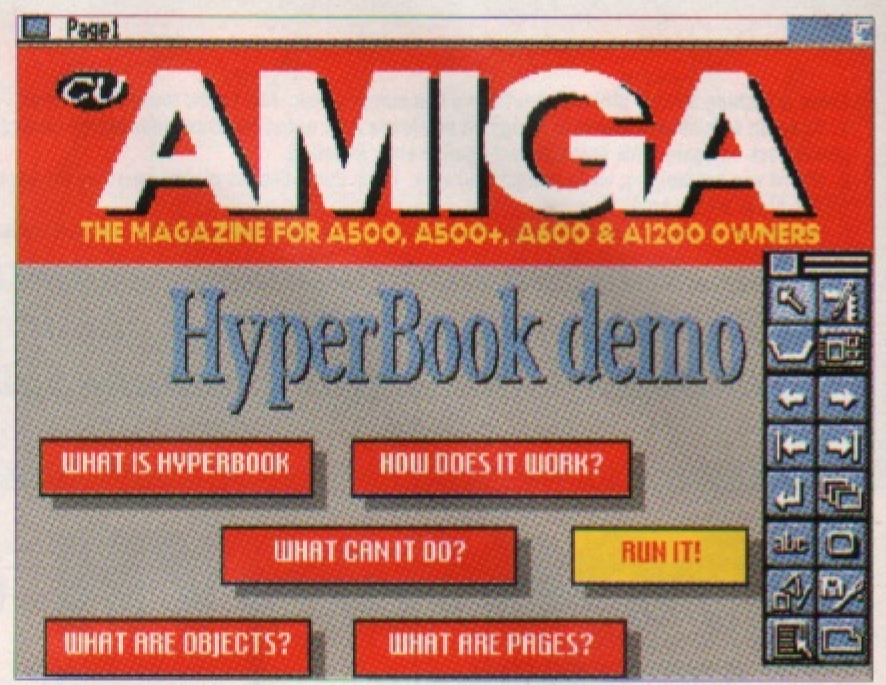
»

» Quite a few multimedia systems are available for the Amiga but by far the easiest (and indeed one of the most capable) is Gold Disk's *HyperBook*.

PAGE PLAY!

The basic concept behind *HyperBook* is very similar to that other great information system, the good old book (remember them?). Like a real book, all the information that you wish to present is held within 'pages' which in turn are linked together to form a book (or a 'stack', as the multimedia purists prefer). Each page within your book can contain any combination of four basic 'objects' – buttons, notes, drawings and lists. These objects can then be assigned one of eight actions which are performed when the user clicks on them with the left mouse button. We'll be covering them in detail later on, but basically you can make any object display a picture, show a text file, run an external program or – providing you've got ARexx – you can even control the actions of other peripherals and software through ARexx 'ports' (this sort of thing is for the techies only, though).

Like a real book, your *HyperBook* applications will be rather limited if they contain only one page, so several pages need to be defined in order to allow a far greater amount of information to be held. In turn, these pages need to be linked by creating objects on each page that display other pages once they've been clicked upon. Anyway, enough of the theory – get stuck in. Turn on your Amiga, insert our *HyperBook* coverdisk in the internal drive and once Workbench has loaded, double click on the *HyperBook* icon to enter the fascinating world of *HyperBook* multimedia...



***HyperBook* puts the power of a multimedia authoring system at your finger tips. We'll be covering the program in more detail in a special series of tutorials starting next month.**

ASSIGNING ACTIONS TO OBJECTS

In order for your *HyperBook* stacks to do anything even remotely useful, you must create objects that, in turn, must have actions assigned to them. When you first create an object though, *HyperBook* doesn't automatically assign an action to it. This you must do yourself. *HyperBook* allows you to assign any one of eight different actions to an object which allow the object to perform a particular task when the user clicks on it with the right mouse button.

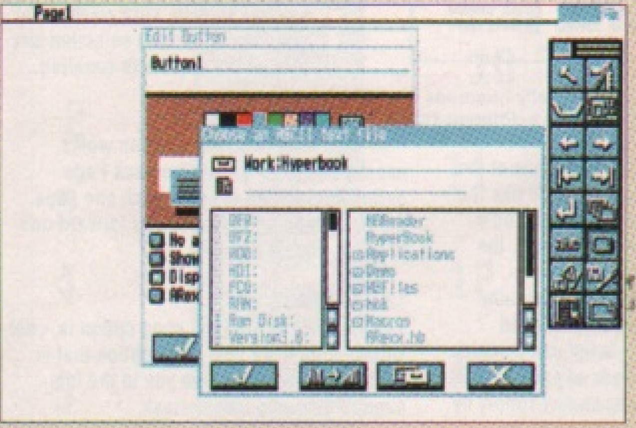
To assign an action to an object, click on the 'Edit Object' tool within the *HyperBook* toolbox window and then click on the object that you're interested in. Once the object is highlighted (*HyperBook* will draw a rectangle around it), click the right mouse button to display the action requestor. In the bottom half of this requester you will see eight tiny gadgets, each with a short item of descriptive text directly to the right of each. Each of these gadgets can be selected to assign an action to an object. Here's a quick rundown of what each does.

NO ACTION

Not surprisingly, the No Action option causes the gadget to do absolutely nothing when the user clicks on it. This is the very exciting default setting.

SHOW PICTURE

Another pretty obvious option this. Show Picture allows you to attach an IFF picture to an object so that when the user clicks on that object, the picture is displayed. Note that although *HyperBook* normally only runs in medium or high resolution, the picture will be displayed on a separate screen using its native screen mode (*HyperBook* can't handle AGA pics though!).



Text files can be accessed via buttons – it is a simple matter of finding the file on your floppies...

DISPLAY TEXT

Built into *HyperBook* is a very useful utility that can display any text file stored in standard ASCII format. Simply click on this option, select the name of the text file to be displayed and that's it – when the user selects the object, *HyperBook* will then display it.

AREXX COMMAND

This is pretty useless unless you own an Amiga equipped with Workbench 2.04 or better. The ARexx command option allows you to attach an ARexx command to an object. You could, for example, use this option to transfer control to an external ARexx script that controls a video disk player.

GO TO PAGE

The Go To Page option provides you with a quick and easy method of moving around the pages within a *HyperBook* stack. *HyperBook* allows you to directly specify a page or simply move to the next, previous, first or last page within a stack.

SHOW/HIDE

The Show/Hide option allows you to turn off another object when the object that this option is assigned to is clicked upon. This can be useful when you need to hide a set of objects until the user has clicked on one object in particular.

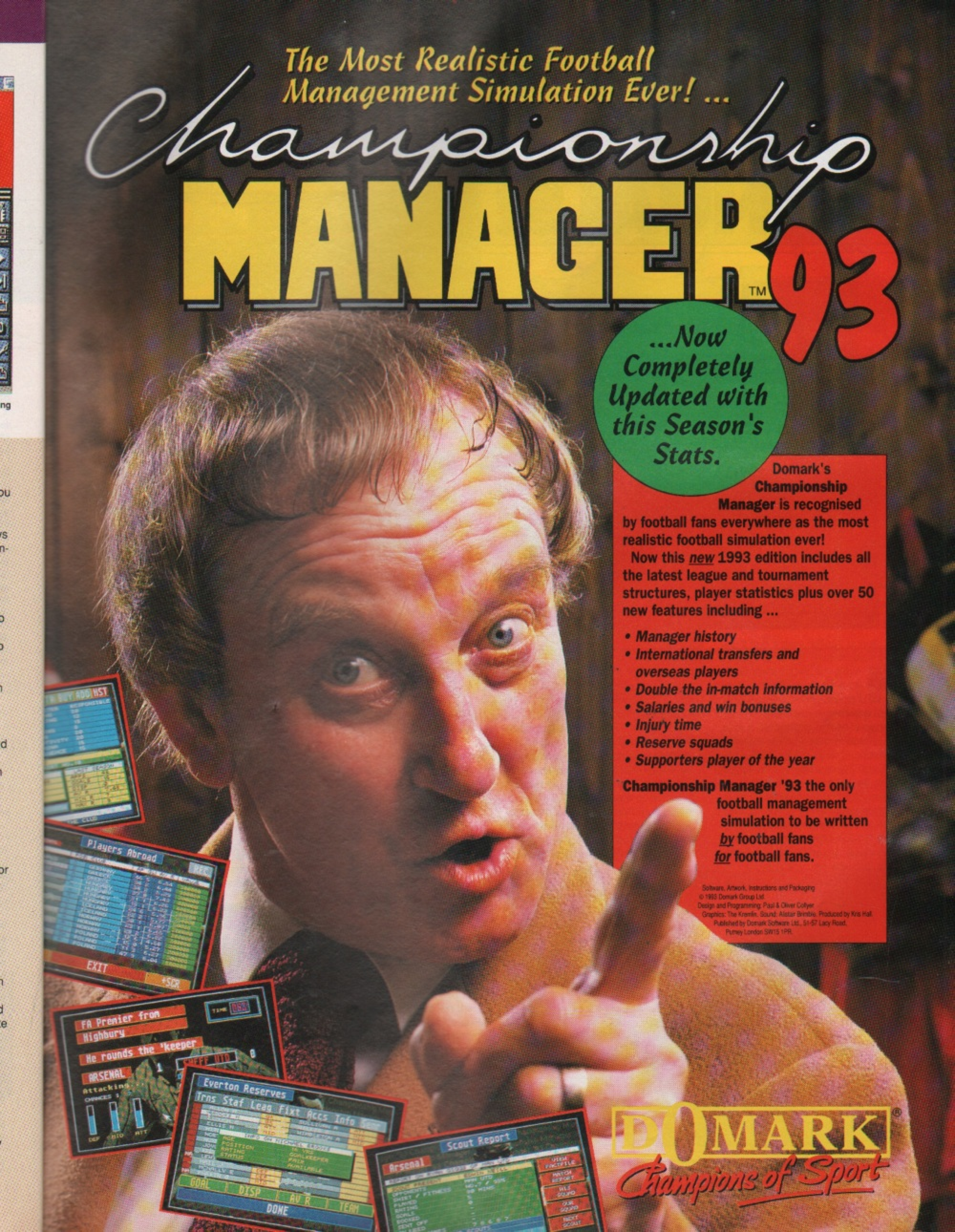
DOS COMMAND

Not surprisingly, the DOS Command option allows you to attach a DOS command to an object so that when the user clicks on that object, an external program is launched. This can be anything from a program (you could use *HyperBook* to create a menu system for your hard disk, for example) or even an AmigaDOS script (using the AmigaDOS 'Execute' command).

AREXX MACRO

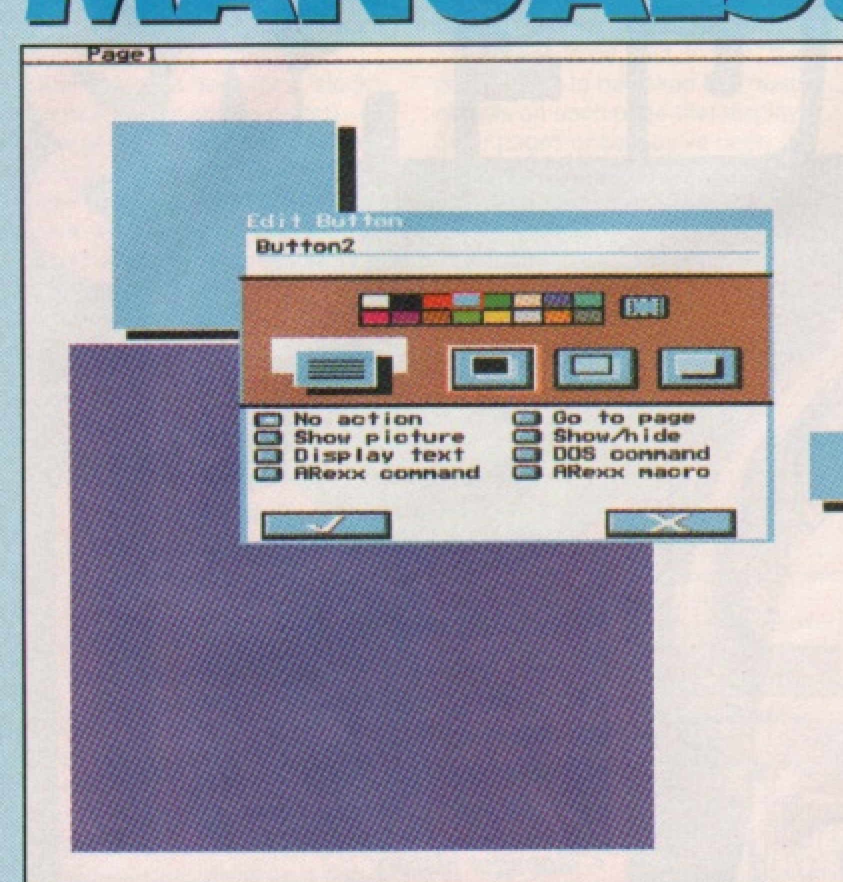
The ARexx Macro option allows any button to run an ARexx macro created (or loaded) by the 'Create Macro' or 'Load Macro' options available from the 'ARexx' pull down menu. This is definitely an option for the techies only.

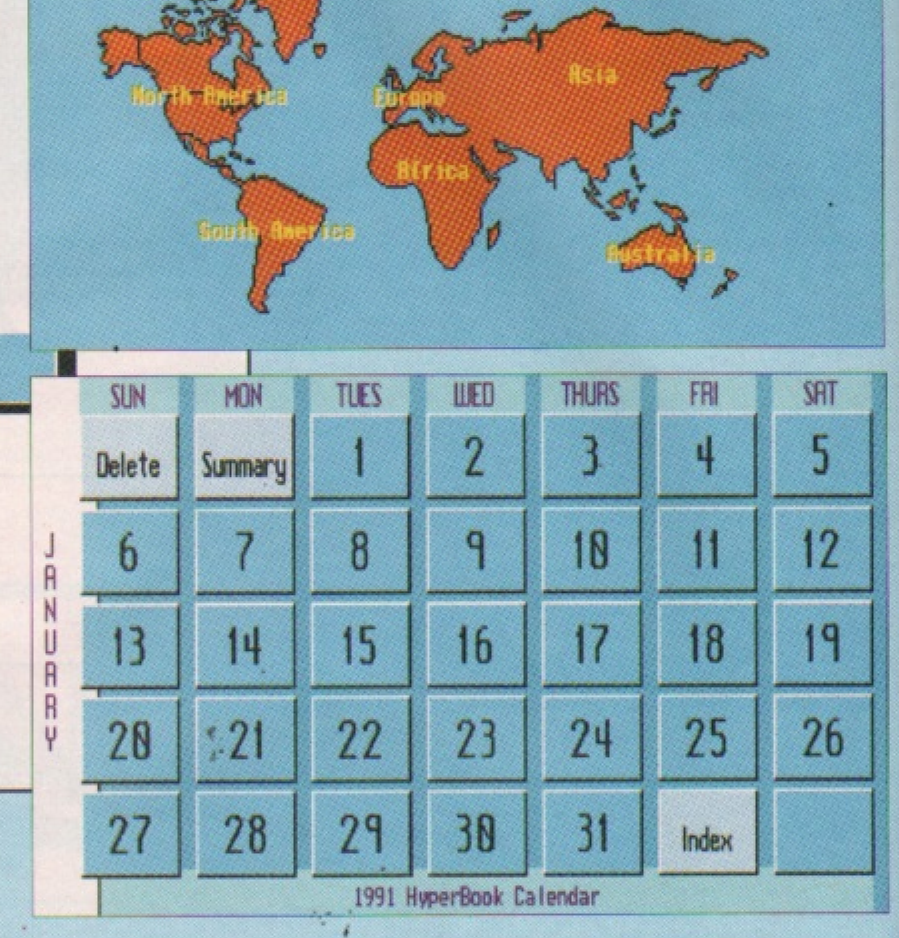
In order for an object to actually do something useful, an action must be attatched to it.


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HYPERBOOK MANUALS!

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Having got your hands on the megatastic and popmungous *Hyperbook* software it will not be long before you experience a strange yearning to possess the associated firmware – the *Hyperbook* manuals.

Enter the true spirit of multimedia – see the program and buy the books! The first manual explains in intricate detail every aspect of every menu and tool in the program. It is full of helpful advice and explanations which not only show you what to do, but why you are doing it.

The second half of this manual details the ARexx port and all the commands available from it – invaluable if you plan to do anything adventurous. This software probably has the most comprehensive ARexx support of any application known to the Amiga, and the only place to find out all the commands available and how to use them is in this book.

And that's not all. The second manual is a guide to creating your own applications. Full of ideas for the office and home, it'll have you creating everything from cookery books to interactive databases.

And all this can be yours for the incredibly toothsome price of just £14.99 (including VAT). Just fill in the coupon below and pop it off to those jolly nice chaps at Silica and they'll do the rest. As if by magic your manuals will be delivered to the comfort of your own home – isn't technology wonderful? And remember, this offer is not available in any record shops.



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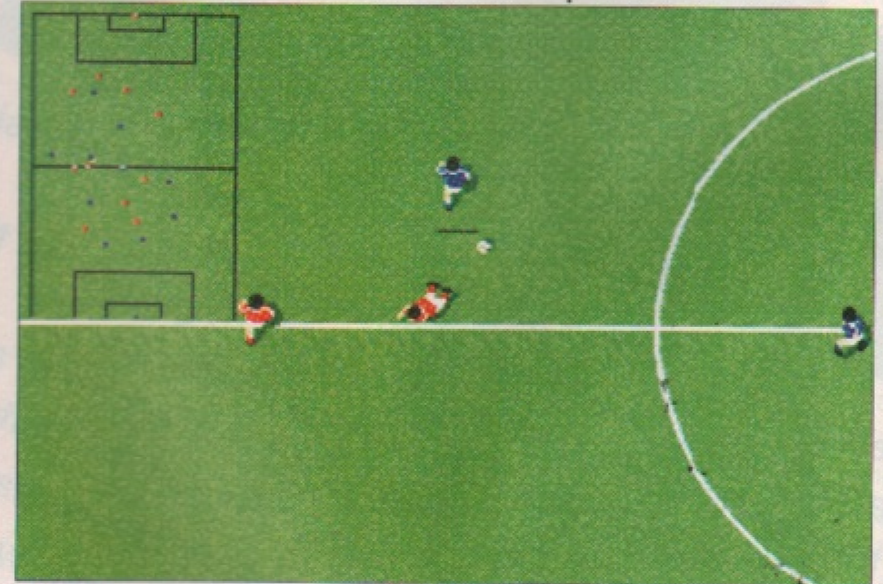


If you read our review of Dino Dini's Goal! last month, you'll already know how much we rate this superb football kickabout. Well, now it's your turn to find out how good it is, as we've got an EXCLUSIVE six-minute playable demo from the great man. Plus! There's your chance to net a limited edition football shirt in an amazing competition.

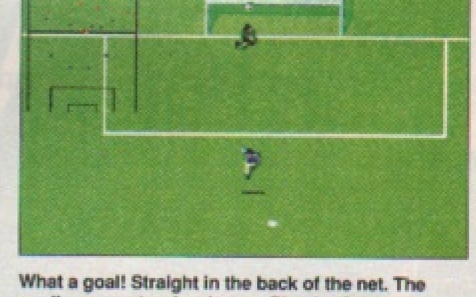
QUICKSTART GUIDE



This month, we've made it easy for you. Simply pop the disk in the disk drive, switch on your machine, and the game will start to load. After a pause, you'll get to see the main screen, reproduced here. Pressing F2 calls up an advert for the game, while F1 brings up a special code which we'll talk more about over the page. To go straight into the game, hold down the fire button on your joystick. After another pause for loading in the game code, you'll be greeted by your team taking the pitch and awwwaaaaay you go!



Yep, you can even foul the opposing player while dribbling your way to glory



What a goal! Straight in the back of the net. The goalie never stood a chance. Pity the CU AMIGA team on Thursday nights aren't quite as good!

We like to think we know a good thing when we see it, and Dino Dini's latest football kickabout is certainly the definitive Amiga soccer sim as far as we're concerned. And, just to show how good this game really is, we've roped in Dino Dini himself to provide us with a six-minute playable demo of this stunning new game!

But this isn't just any ordinary demo. Oh no! Dino's cleverly constructed the game so that it's played as a series of progressively harder levels. Access is only granted to the next level once you've successfully put the ball into the back of the net – fail to do this within the one-minute time limit and you're taken back to the front screen and given your paltry score!

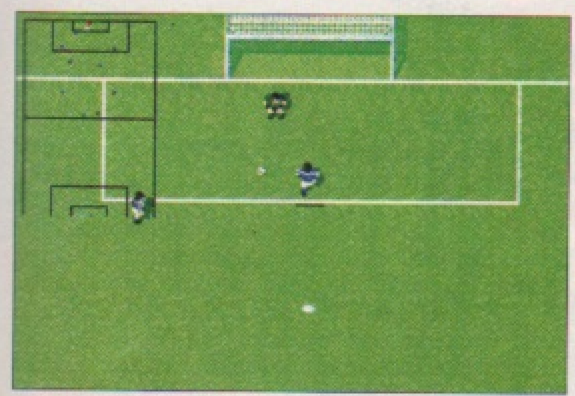
The first level is a bit of a doddle, really, as the other team have forgotten to show up, so you can just run up the centre of the pitch and rifle your shot home without any interference. From then on, though, things get a little more complicated.

The away team's coach arrives and the opposing players take the field. Luckily, level two's opponents are still a bit wobbly on their legs, so, with a little skill, it's possible to run rings around them as you juggle the ball from foot to foot and then sprint into the penalty area and plant a shot in the back of the net.

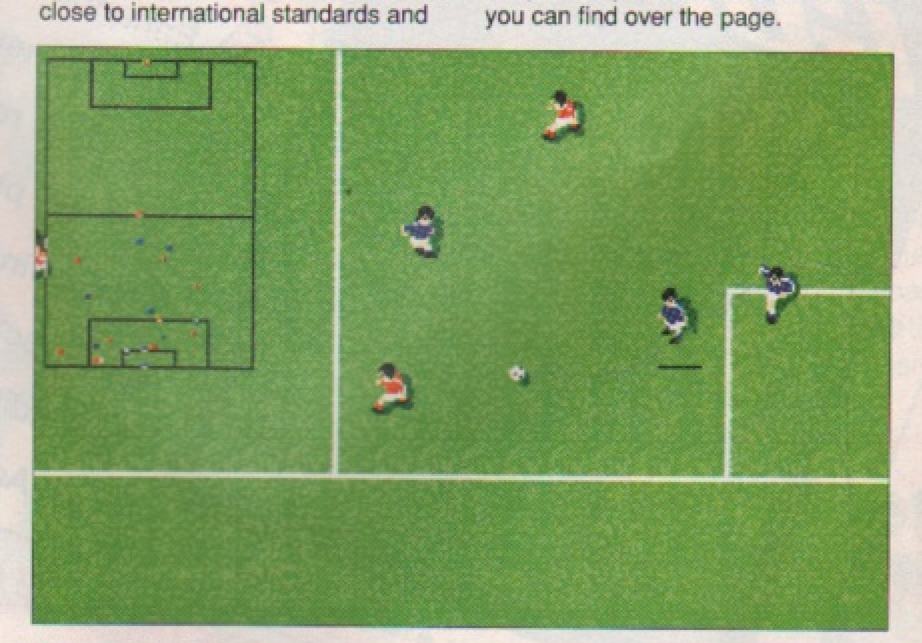
Level three, and things really start to hot up. The new team have been sharpening their ball skills and can now manage to string a few passes together. Not only that, but they are also capable of pulling off a range of trick shots such as a clever back heel and an overhead lob. By level four your opponents are getting close to international standards and you'll find it very difficult to find enough space to get in a shot at goal.

The fifth level is an even tighter game, as each member of the opposing team seem to possess the silky skills of Pelé as they weave the ball around the pitch. And if you manage a goal on the sixth level, you can really call yourself a pro!

And that's all there is to it. If you become really good at it, and can manage to put away all six goals, you might like to take part in a rather unique competition, details of which you can find over the page.

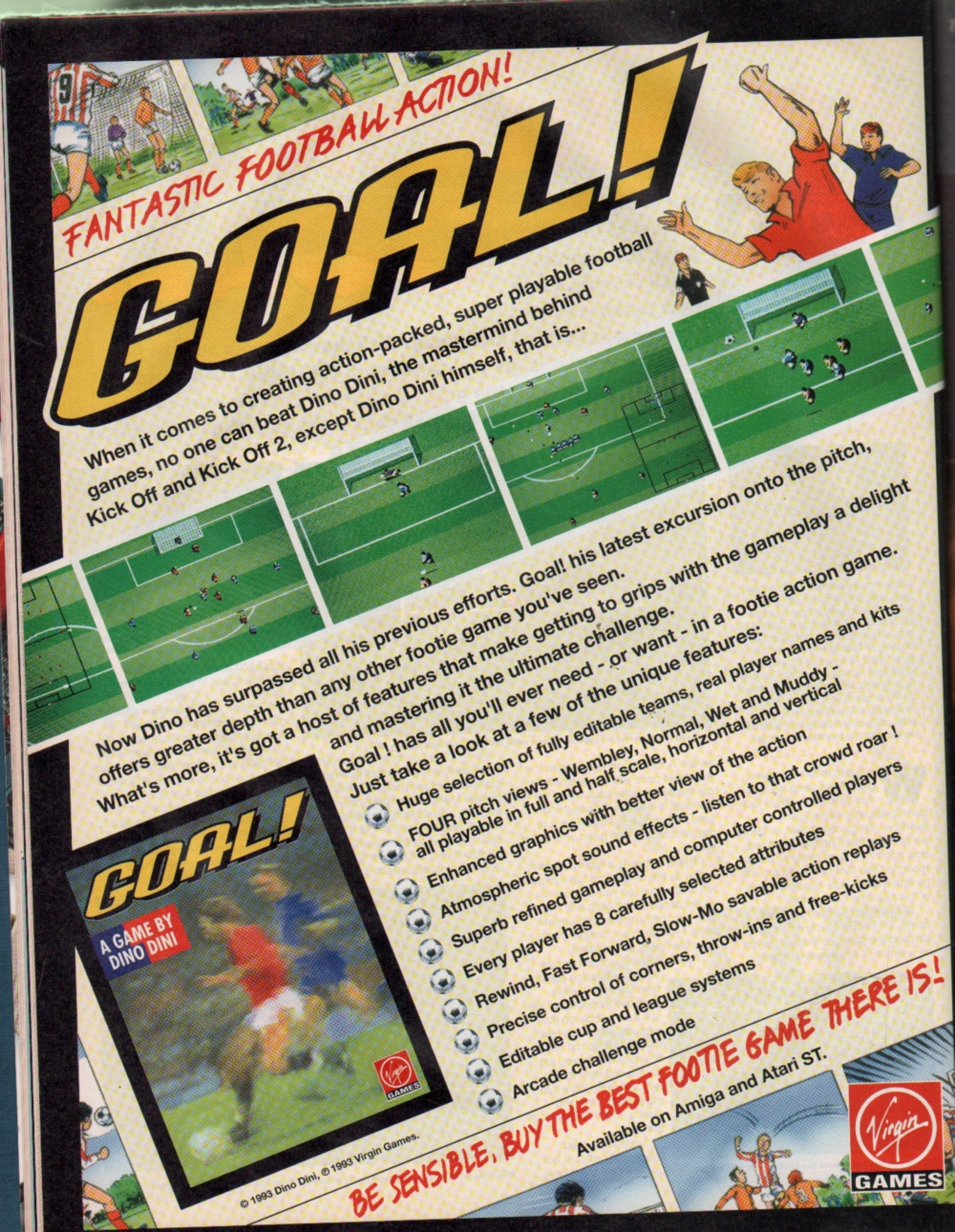


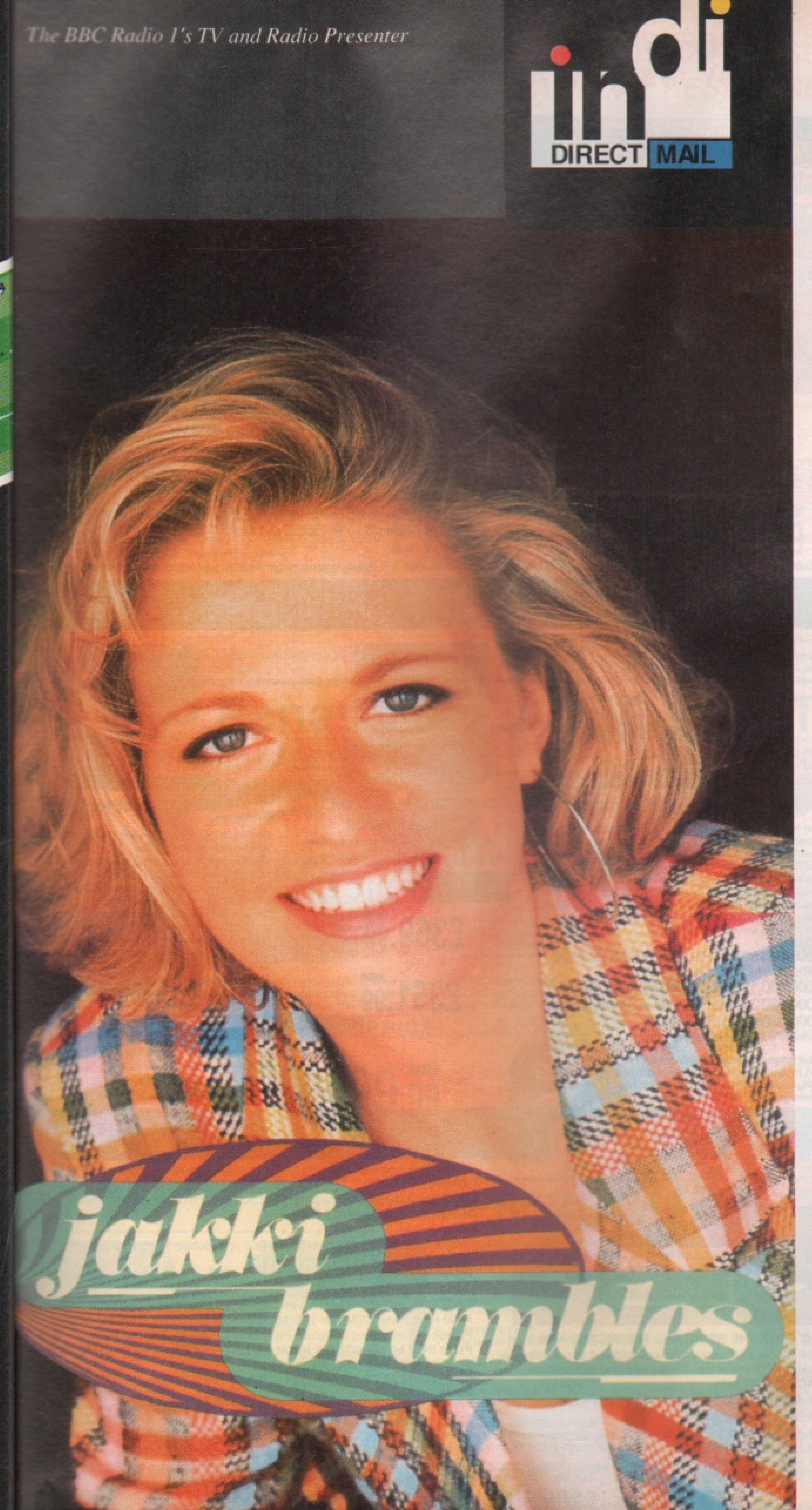
The old one-two and it looks like another goal is in the net.



This is more like it. The away team finally show their faces and the competition begins to hot up.

»


FANTASTIC FOOTBALL ACTION!
GOAL!
When it comes to creating action-packed, super playable football games, no one can beat Dino Dini, the mastermind behind Kick Off and Kick Off 2, except Dino Dini himself, that is...
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Goal ! has all you'll ever need - or want - in a footie action game.
Just take a look at a few of the unique features:
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FOUR pitch views - Wembley, Normal, Wet and Muddy - all playable in full and half scale, horizontal and vertical
Enhanced graphics with better view of the action
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INDI DIRECT MAIL PROUDLY PRESENTS THE *Jakki Brambles Column*

HI ,I'm Jakki Brambles and from this month on I'll be writing this column exclusively for INDI.

So knowing that all you folks are Commodore fanatics, I will be aiming to provide you with the best inside information on what's new in the Commodore world together with the latest hints and tips.

Since agreeing to write for INDI, I have been amazed at how big the Commodore market place is. INDI tell me that their sales desk has been swamped with orders for their Amiga 1200 hard disk offers.

Not surprising, when you consider that they are offering a product officially covered by Commodore maintenance through Wang UK.

Of course, you can buy a non standard Amiga with a dealers own warranty but thenCommodore do not give their approval with out a great deal of thought, I know what I'dprefer to buy.

Congratulations to David Pleasance on his appointment as General Manager at Commodore as he takes the helm from Kelly Sumner. David has been at Commodore for many years and has most recently been responsible for the developement of their business in the States.

Commodore tell me that the A1200 Comic Relief Pack has been a real success, thanks to all you generous Sleepwalker fans. Don't forget Commodore donate £10 on your behalf to the Comic Relief Fund for every Pack sold.

By now you will all know about the new Amiga 4000/030 and it's amazing capabilities but more about that next month, especially If I can get my hands on one before they are all gone!

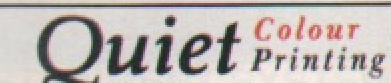
What I need now is loads of feedback from you. Tell me about your Amiga and if you have any tips that may help others or problems that I can pass on.The best letter will be printed and the winner will receive a suitably excessive prize. All letters to *Jakki Brambles Column C/o INDI Direct Mail, 1 Ringway Ind. Estate, Eastern Ave. Lichfield, Staffs, Ws13 7SF.*

See You Next Month.
Kind Regards

Jakki Brambles

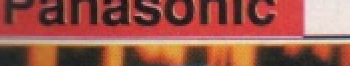
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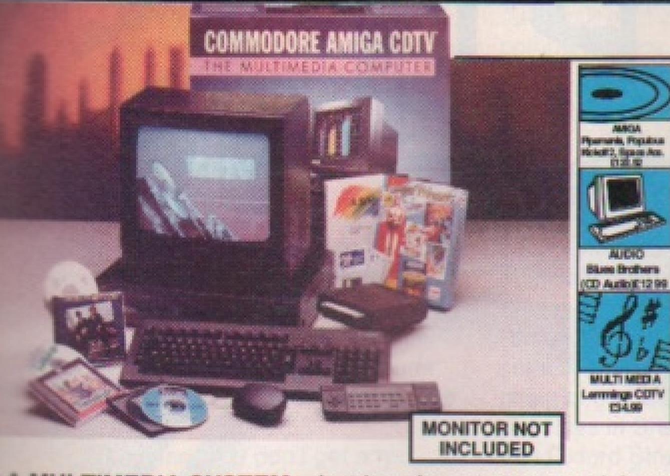
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The problem with any new product is that it always takes time for everyone to realise its full potential. CDTV is no exception and in our opinion everything we have read does a pretty poor job of explaining just what CDTV can do and why it is so exciting,

THE INDI GUIDE TO CDTV

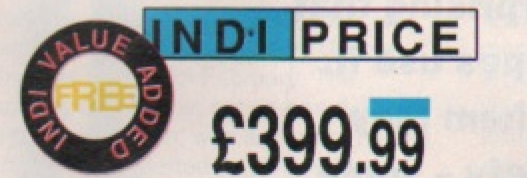
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Bright sparks

There have always existed, on the periphery of science and the normal world, a group of men and women who pioneer the frontiers of technology, expanding the horizons of conventional experience. The Amiga was created by people like this, so it's not really surprising that a lot of very 'creative' types use it. Along the way some of them may achieve fame and notoriety – some may even make a living – but from the graphics artists to the multimedia maestros they all have one thing in common – a belief in the Amiga not just as a computer, more as a way of life.

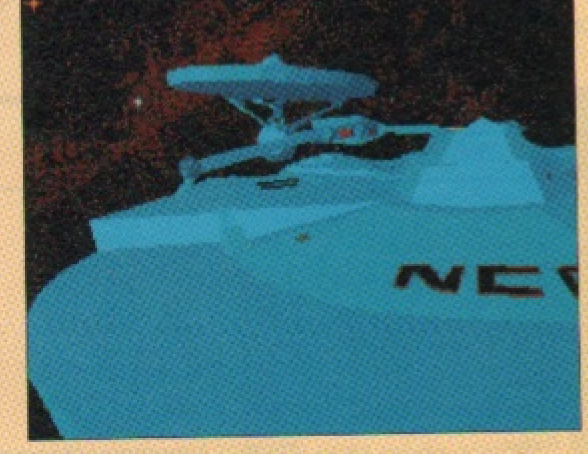
So settle down while we give you a tour of some of the people who help make the Amiga what it is. You never know, you may get some ideas.

TOBIAS RICHTER

GRAPHIC ARTIST

Still only 25 years of age, Tobias Richter already has an enviable reputation as an Amiga graphic artist. His first public domain demos began to appear five years ago and have gradually increased in complexity with each new release. Most of his 3D animations and graphic disks adopt a sci-fi theme, with the USS Enterprise figuring largely in the scheme of things. And no wonder, as Tobias must be one of the biggest *Star Trek* nuts ever!

That's not to say the talented German artist has not explored other avenues, as he's also produced a rich variety of animations covering everything from a speeding sports car to a flypast from an F15 fighter. Other graphic disks have included anything from still-life portraits to reinterpretations of classic films. Recently, Tobias has also moved into video production. Using the processing power of five different Amigas he's channelled his excellent animation skills and graphical prowess into producing some stunning-looking videos. The best of these is undoubtedly *Space Wars*, a five-minute movie featuring all manner of SF-related hardware, including Imperial Cruisers, X-Wing and Tie-fighters, the Enterprise and a host of other famous sci-fi icons.



Another is a *Trek*-based mini-movie lasting eight-minutes involving the Enterprise engaging a Klingon cruiser. A third, *Mouse Track*, was a demo reel made for the German distributor of *Reflections*, an excellent 3D animation package that Tobias uses for the majority of his work.

He's produced a handful of commercial animations for industry and TV and has worked on the German equivalent of *Spitting Image* called *Hurra Deutschland*.

He is writing a book about Amiga animation, writes regularly for the German Amiga mags and has provided the graphics for a wide range of games including the likes of *Oil Imperium*, *Cubulus*, and *Bundesliga Manager Professional*. His latest project is his most promising – he's been signed up to produce some computer animations for *Moontrap 2*, a new sci-fi movie due for release in 1994. He'll be producing all the computer displays and on-screen graphics.

TEAM 17

SOFTWARE HOUSE

The recent recipients of a coveted Golden Joystick for Software House of the Year, Team 17 continue to go from strength to strength. Founded in December 1990, they've quickly built up an enviable track record of hit after number one hit. And best of all, they've done so by specialising in Amiga games. PC owners and console kids have had to look on with envy, as Amiga owners have enjoyed some of the best computer games produced over the last couple of years.

Of course, you don't get anywhere without a lot of hard work, and its two founding directors, Martyn Brown and Mick Robinson, have certainly put a lot of graft into the company since its launch. Martyn Brown, who heads up the design and development side of Team 17, was originally head honcho at PD library, 17-Bit Software, where his contacts with Amiga programmers, musicians and artists convinced him he could produce better games than many of the efforts being released onto the market at the time. Mick Robinson, meanwhile, had been steadily building up the Microbyte chain of game stores with flagship premises in Sheffield's Meadowhall and Oxford Street in London.



It was Mick's financial expertise and Martyn's creative management that finally convinced the pair to join forces and establish a new software house.

Although their stated intention was to release 1Mb-only titles, the first Team 17 release was actually a 512K game. *Full Contact* was a fast-paced karate-inspired beat 'em up and was released at a budget busting price of just £9.99. Not surprisingly, it immediately shot to the top of the budget charts and established Team 17 as a top-quality software house.

Their first full price game, *Alien Breed*, also did exceptionally well, topping the charts yet again, and the rest, as they say, is history. With another five full-price games lined up over the course of the next twelve months, plus another eight budget releases, 1993 promises to be their busiest year yet!

ERIC SCHWARTZ

ANIMATOR

Mention Amiga animation and there's a good chance that you'll think of Eric Schwartz. Over the past five years, his zany cartoons, featuring the likes of Flip the Frog and Amy the Squirrel, have consistently topped the PD charts and been raved about in the computer press. Using Gold Disk's *MovieSetter*, various paint packages, and an abundance of creative talent, Eric has a back catalogue of more than 40 animation disks, each one a classic example of its genre. From Space Shuttles playing shuttlecock in outer space to an invisible Stealth Bomber sneaking up on another plane and tapping its wings, Eric has a knack for absorbing the comic elements out of a situation and inflating them to gigantic proportions.



Still attending art college, and only just turned 20, the American-based artist has already dipped a cautious toe into the commercial world. Team 17's recently-released *Superfrog* game featured a three-minute demo from Eric and he's lined up several more projects in the near future. There's also the possibility of a series of short animated movies in the not-too-distant future. Eric has even attracted the interest of the Disney organisation, which uses Amigas extensively at its Dublin-based animation college, and is all set to break into the world of commercial animation once he's completed his studies.

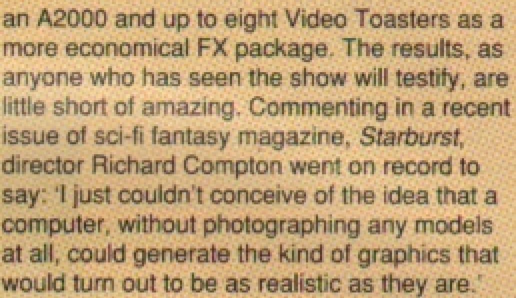
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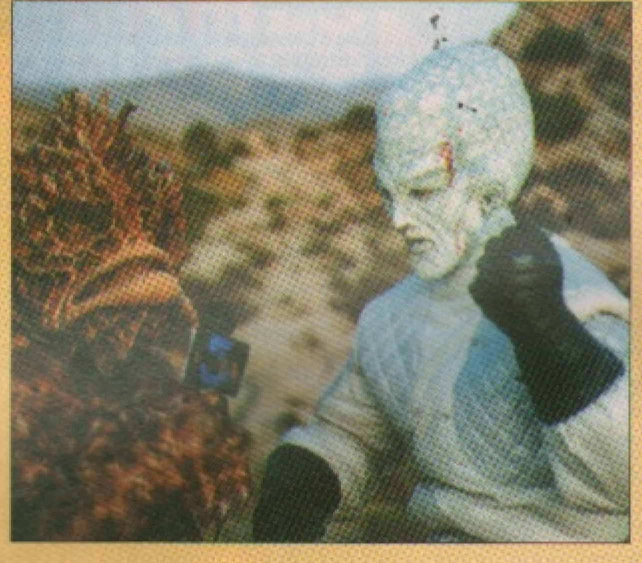
SCIENCE FICTION SHOW/DESKTOP VIDEO

Touted as one of the hottest sci-fi shows of recent times, *Babylon 5* received its US premiere towards the end of February. The two-hour long pilot movie, set on-board a huge sprawling space station, was an instant hit and filming has already started on 26 one-hour episodes to be screened later this year. What makes the show stand out from the current glut of sci-fi shows, however, is that most of the pilot's special effects were created using an Amiga and NewTek's Video Toaster hardware.

Rejecting traditional model-based animations, the show's producers decided to opt for an A2000 and up to eight Video Toasters as a more economical FX package. The results, as anyone who has seen the show will testify, are little short of amazing. Commenting in a recent issue of sci-fi fantasy magazine, *Starburst*, director Richard Compton went on record to say: 'I just couldn't conceive of the idea that a computer, without photographing any models at all, could generate the kind of graphics that would turn out to be as realistic as they are.'

NewTek's all-in-one broadcast quality workstation was launched in October 1990 and was an instant success, being hailed as the 'complete video studio in a box'. Paul Montgomery and Tim Jenison, the development team behind the Toaster, set out to create a DTV environment that was 'good enough for the film industry, but also cheap enough for the home user to enjoy'.





Today, the Toaster has been used extensively in commercials, TV shows and movies, including *Star Trek VI*. Both Montgomery and Jenison are fanatical *Star Trek* fans, so when Paramount approached them to work on one of the *Trek* movies they jumped at the chance. Interestingly, the team also claim to have held back the marketing of the Video Toaster until they could achieve a satisfactory beam down effect!

AEON DESIGN

TRAIN SIMULATOR

Before its recent refurbishment the London Transport Museum used to have a couple of Amigas on display. They weren't being shown off as pieces of outdated technology though. Two A2000s were simulating some of the trains of yesteryear that used to roam up and down the subterranean thouroughfares, carrying passengers to and from their places of work.

The software and hardware were put together by a team called Aeon Design, who also produced an animation which simulated the progress of the train up and down the line. In the 1890 simulator, the throttle control was a giant rheostat or variable resistor. This was connected up through an interface to the Amiga which then read the position of the lever and adjusted the animation accordingly.



The 1990 simulator had a more up to date throttle lever (which was connected in exactly the same way) but the Amiga also controlled digital displays showing the train's actual speed and its optimum speed, as they are displayed in the more modern trains.

The Amiga also played back samples when the train was in the station, taken from actual journeys on the Underground.

The train simulator was quite a hit at the museum among the various dignitaries and notables who visited it, including former transport secretary Cecil Parkinson. Members of the general public were not so impressed, complaining that the simulator was unrealistic – after all it never broke down, it was very clean and it was always on time.

REAL TIME GRAPHICS

TV SHOW GRAPHICS



Would it surprise you to learn that some of the most impressive computer graphics on TV at the moment are produced by a company using an Amiga? Well, actually they use several but the principle still holds good! That company is Real Time Graphics and they work on many top TV shows, including *Gamesmaster* and Sky TV's *Games World*.

Real Time is headed up by two guys with many years experience in both television and Amiga graphics. Simon Dunstan and Christopher Mills started their TV careers in 1985 as freelance designers on Channel 4's Network 7, a Janet Street-Porter 'yoof' programme. Even way back then Simon was using an Amiga to handle some of the graphics work. His first contact with the machine came about as a result of some game work he was doing for a company called Ram Jam. Unfortunately they folded before the game was finished, but they did leave him with one of the original 1000s.

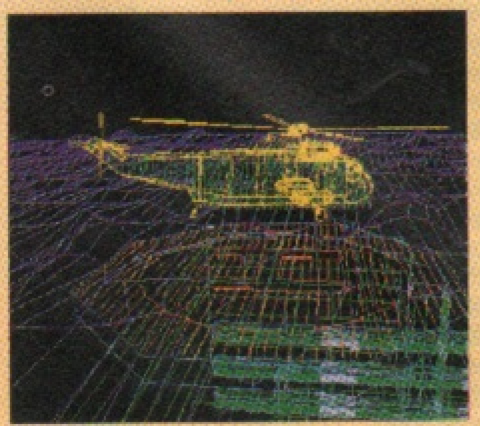
After the successful Network 7 went off the air, Simon and Chris moved on to a programme called *Star Test*. The concept for this show was that each week a celebrity would be interviewed by a pseudo computer and the stars would be seen through one of the computer's many cameras. The scope for computer graphics was obvious and Simon and Chris were involved in designing the screen layout. The show was successful and a second series was commissioned. At this point the guys decided to set up a company to handle the work and Real Time was born. Business grew with more work coming in from other arty shows, including *Star Chamber*, a series of *Catchphrase* (?!!), *Gamesmaster* and, now, Sky TV's *Games World*.



Real Time's involvement in the shows extends all the way from the title sequences to *Gamesmaster's* famous 'Consoletation Zone' and it's all done with Amigas! For example, the stuff for *Gamesmaster* was done on A2000s running at 50MHz with GVP boards installed. It would be a mistake, though, to think that the guys are getting money for old rope as their Amiga animations are highly developed pieces of work.

The Consoletation Zone itself is an astonishingly complex piece of graphic work involving multiple video and Amiga layering. The sky is a simple drawing that's been tilted and faded by a Digital Video Effects unit and an animated sea is overlaid on it. The sea is in turn overlaid by another animation, usually Patrick Moore's head, which has been titled and stretched by a DVE. They then use two Amigas to create animated maps of Patrick's face which are run slightly out of phase to create a time-lapse effect. Wow! All that effort for a sequence running no more than a couple of minutes. It's sad then that for a show that uses Amigas so much they spend all their time talking about consoles!

Simon is particularly excited about their latest work on *Games World* as it has allowed them to experiment with lip syncing an animated character. One of the episodes features a female character who hands out games advice and cheats, rather like Patrick Moore on *Gamesmaster*. The difference here though is that the character is completely animated with a real-life actress providing the voice. The challenge then was to make the character seem as realistic as possible whilst still retaining the computer feel. This they have achieved very successfully. Whilst not totally happy with the sync they plan to add many more frames to the lips to get them as close to perfect as possible.



Real Time have got a lot of projects in the pipeline but they're still very much hush-hush. We'll keep you up to date with what they do. You don't want to miss the chance to catch your favourite machine being stretched to the limit.

NIK WILLIAMS

PICTUREWARE



Nik Williams originally hit the Amiga press with the launch of *Pictureware*, a set of licensed clip-art images which addressed a market need. With a high quality video camera and a variety of Amiga equipment, he travelled the highways and byways collecting an impressive library of images. Nik then sold the sets as licenseware, charging insignificant amounts for disks full of top quality images.

He used his knowledge of the Amiga, and the applications software available on it, to create stand alone multimedia terminals. The first was used as an interactive show guide last year. Called a Visual Presentation Centre, it is really a super tower system which can accept any current Amiga computer, including the CDTV. Once an Amiga has been installed it is then connected to the input device, a 16 button touch sensitive keyboard. This has been constructed in such a way that a user-defined template can be slipped in on top.

For the units shown so far Nik has relied on a number of software packages, but Scala is used to drive the system in use. The latest development is the implementation of 'through the glass' technology, which allows the unit to be used by people physically separated from it, as in a shop-window type situation. This means that the units could be used by passers-by even if the shop/showroom wasn't even open, an idea which is currently being researched by Ford.

His hope is that such systems will be used in various situations where people may need information but which are not permanently staffed: railway stations, showrooms, estate agencies, hotels and shopping complexes are all prime candidates..

PORTADOWN PLANETARIUM

MULTIMEDIA INFORMATION SYSTEM

The stars are a long way away. The light coming from most of them takes generations to reach us. Many of these celestial bodies may no longer exist, but could have been blown apart years ago.

The light from distant stars is of direct interest to the Armagh Planetarium, and the planetarium is of direct interest to us. Why? Because out of the many exhibits and interactive learning tools employed there, some of the most popular are Amigas. They are cheap, versatile and easy to use. The planetarium soon realised the benefits of an exhibit which could be changed simply by loading up some new software. Instead of expensive to produce, difficult to maintain and short-lived physical exhibits, the Amiga offers an interactive platform which can be changed to suit current needs.

The Amigas, in conjunction with A590 hard disks, are used to drive laserdisk devices containing stills and video sequences. The Amiga simultaneously displays background information on another screen, explaining various aspects about...well, whatever the pictures are about.

There are three Amigas in use, displaying information on the stars and how they are formed, Mars and the weather. Unfortunately many visitors have recognised the controlling Amiga, and since the software takes some time to set up precautions in the form of large keyboard protectors are necessary to prevent errant visitors doing a soft reset.

Because these sytems can be re-used they have a virtually infinite lifetime – they will only become redundant when a more revolutionary form of multimedia information station is available, perhaps one based around virtual reality. If so, the only commercially proven VR system, once again, is based on the Amiga platform.



» JEFF WALKER

MAGAZINE PUBLISHER

Work started on setting up *Just Amiga Monthly* (*JAM*) in August 1990, six months after Jeff Walker had resigned from his previous job as Editor of *Amiga Computing*. He wanted to produce a 'serious' Amiga enthusiast magazine and to use the Amiga to do it.

In September of that year the first issue was published, reproduced from original artwork printed on a Canon BJ-130 bubble jet. Fewer than 100 copies were sold. But then it WAS mail-order only and it would take a while for the great unwashed (that's you lot) to cotton-on to the adverts.

After setting-up costs and another print run for the second issue, the capital was dwindling fast.

Throwing caution to the wind (heck, it's only money!) Jeff gambled the best part of what was left in a small stand at the 1990 Commodore Show. From then on he's never looked back.

In those days *JAM* was being produced with *Professional Page 1.3* on a standard Amiga 2000 with 3Mb of RAM and a 20Mb hard drive. With the first real 'positive cashflow' Jeff bought a second-hand A2630 accelerator card which boosted his RAM by 4Mb and gave him greater speed in one fell swoop.

Today, he has an A500, 2000 and 3000. Two massive hard drives, still barely 30 per cent full, store all the JAM data and leave plenty of room for the future. The acquisition of an Epson GT-6000 flatbed scanner has helped to speed-up production and increase the quality of the mag.

Jeff would like to see *JAM* more widely read. Putting it on the news-stand would probably be a mistake as there are already so many Amiga mags to choose from. But the British are not 'joiners', on the whole they prefer not to commit themselves and have an inexplicable suspicion about subscribing to anything, so although *JAM* has thousands of readers worldwide, the big battle at home has yet to be won. If you'd like to know more you can contact *JAM* on: 0895 274449.

ALTERNATIVE IMAGE

GRAPHICS COMPANY



There are some people who have been around the Amiga scene for years, and then there are the people that remember the first lot of people when they were newcomers. One such group of people run Alternative Image.

The expertise combined in Yuri Large and Henri Bujko is the force behind the company. They produce corporate graphics for presentations, including slides and animations. Clients include Bass, Walkers crisps and Caterpillar, the industrial plant equipment manufacturer.

Integrated into the heart of their hi-band and SP U-matic video equipment are a host of Amiga 2000s. The boxes may be old, but they are sturdy and house a number of surprises which would put an A4000 to shame. Every piece of notable video hardware has been in and out of these machines at some time or another, because Alternative Image also operate as Amiga dealers.

The video side of their work used to revolve around rock bands, but unfortunately most of the bands they produced vids for soon split up or fizzled out – videos aren't everything. Now they are producing fitness videos which are sold through retail chains like W.H.Smith.

However this may change. They may be lured back into the music side of the business if their current ventures with German company Studio 7 pay off. Studio 7 were behind the 3-Lux 2 vid reviewed in these hallowed pages back in March and are now working on a title called X-Mix Volume 1 in conjunction with Alternative Image. Because these projects work on a royalty basis there will be no money coming in from them until some time after they are completed. This means that they must work on more normal projects during the day and catch up on the video work at night. It may sound like hard work, and it certainly is, but it is varied and interesting we were assured by Henri.

IRA CURTIS COLEMAN

COMPUTER FX

Ira Curtis Coleman is a design engineer with a neat sideline in computer hardware special effects.

One of the main aims of any film or TV show is to make the action as realistic as possible. Whether it's set on an alien planet or in some big city dealer's office, you've got to believe that the actors are really there. Equally, no matter what the location it's usual for the plot to reflect real life in some way. These days that usually involves sticking a computer in every other shot. It's very difficult to shoot a scene which involves computers because every screen flickers to a greater or lesser extent and, if that flicker is being viewed via a machine which also flickers, i.e. the camera's shutter, it can cause the computer display to appear blank. The normal way to avoid this is to lock the camera's shutter to the speed of the computer screen. This can cause a problem in long shots because the sound can gradually drift out of sync with the vision.



This is where Ira comes in – not only does he design the computer screen displays you see he also has invented numerous bits of hardware that keep these screens in sync with the cameras. His engineering background has enabled him to understand how the camera and lighting works.

His list of credits stretches over 10 years and reads like a who's who of TV and films with titles like *Alien, Outlander, Brazil, A View to a Kill, Superman, Spies Like Us* and, more recently, *Splitting Heirs, Inspector Morse, Taggart* and *Peak Practice.*

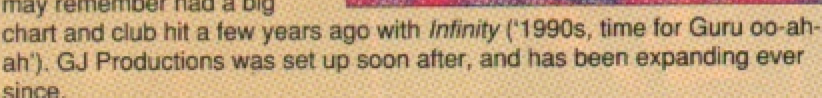
It would be nice to claim that he uses nothing but Amigas but the truth is that he uses a range of machines. The type of machine used depends on what he's trying to achieve. For instance, on ITV's one-off drama, *Seekers*, he used an Amiga in a scene where one character was being fingerprinted. Despite the fact that it was disguised as a PC he used it to draw and display the fingerprint on a screen.

GJ PRODUCTIONS

AUDIO VISUAL

At the other end of the scale from Deep Evolution, GJ Productions are using their Amigas as part of a lavish audio visual setup, but with the same goal – to produce the best club and rave visuals ever seen.

GJ are actually the initials of the founder member of the group, Guru Josh, who you may remember had a big chart and club hit a few years ago with *Infinity* ('1990s, time for Guru oo-ah-ah'). GJ Productions was set up soon after, and has been expanding ever since.



VR Dance in Cyberspace, GJ's first release, brought video raving to the masses. A rich mix of intense computer graphics and video effects, topped by a pounding soundtrack, it promised to take you on a journey to the edge of reality, traversing the inner universe of the human mind.

Around the same time, they also made the highly successul promotional video for Urban Shakedown's *Some Justice*. Next came the inevitable sequel, VR 2, which picked up the sub-concious neural package tour where the first left off, and VR 3 is now in the final stages of production.

GJ's headquarters is very impressive. Josh writes all the soundtracks in the luxury of the fully equipped recording studio. Most of the visuals are created with a combination of Amigas and PCs, combined with chromakeyed live video.

The Amigas provide a lot of the abstract effects, like plasma and colour-cycled backdrops, and a VideoToaster takes care of some of the more advanced effects. The first couple of videos featured plenty of vector bobs and other demo effects, courtesy of LSD. GJ are keen to get back into using more graphics from Amiga demos, and are currently on the lookout for new material. Contact them on: 081 995 2723.

DANNY ELFMAN

MOVIE SCORES

From *Batman* to *Beetlejuice*, from *Pee Wee's Big Adventure* to *Scrooged*, one man's worked on 'em all using an Amiga. No it's not Tim Burton, the Amiga might be versatile but it can't direct a film. The man I've got in mind is Danny Elfman, the composer of the soundtracks for all those movies.

Danny started his musical career playing in various rock bands before turning his attention to the film world. His talents were quickly spotted by director Tim Burton who gave Danny his first big break working on the score for Pee Wee's Big Adventure, a film starring a weird kid's Saturday TV show host (who, incidentally, was arrested many years later for allegedly exposing himself in a film theatre).



From that beginning he's gone on to score many soundtracks, including *Midnight Run, Wisdom, Darkman, Dick Tracy, Nightbreed* and most of Tim Burton's later films. He's even worked on TV show music for *The Simpsons, Tales from the Crypt* and an episode of Alfred Hitchcock Presents. Looking at this list it's easy to see why he calls himself a 'Dark Guy' and, if you've ever really listened to some of those soundtracks, you'd have to agree with him!

So, how does he use an Amiga? Obviously he doesn't score whole motion picture themes on a standard Amiga. Rather he uses one to run *Bars and Pipes Pro* utilising its unlimited stave notation and full SMPTE compatibility for synth work and even for sections of orchestration. Incidentally, he's not the only professional musician currently using Blue Ribbon's excellent music package, others include Evelyn Glennie (also profiled here), Bobby Brown and many more. Some can't be mentioned as they usually claim a royalty for their name being used, but one we do know about has a close connection to a religious figure and has a fondness for conical bras. Nuff said!

DEEP EVOLUTION

VIDEO SPECIALISTS

Proving that you don't need a mega-buck video studio to make professional club visuals, Alix Pennycuick and Steve Griffiths (AKA Deep Evolution), created their *Cyber Dream* video with no more than a 1Mb A500, a VHS video recorder and a couple of DJ turntables.

Alix, who had already supplied graphics for MTV, saw the need for some visual stimulation at one of his favourite nights, and decided to remedy the situation himself. Using his



Amiga and a lot of imagination, he assembled no less than 30,000 frames of Amiga graphics, and mixed them all up into a 20 minute feast of hypnotic eyeball fodder.

Animations were created with *DPaint III* and *IV*, and a lot of use was made of the PD fractal generator *Mandanim*, which Alix got from the February 1992 CU AMIGA coverdisk. Plenty of colour cycling was used to keep it all flowing and mutating. The video was mastered on a VHS recorder, and the results are surprisingly sharp. The talents of DJ Steve Griffiths were called upon to overdub a continuous mix of instrumental house tunes.

Cyber Dream was made at the end of 1992, and since then Alix has moved onto bigger things. He's currently working on a three hour video for another club, which is to be visual only. The DJs of the night will be left to spin their own choice of tunes, while the visuals are displayed larger-than-life on a video projector. The hardware behind it has been upgraded to an A1200, which has allowed more variety in the effects, with morphing and *Vista* fractal landscape animations getting a look in. Alix and Steve are also looking forward to releasing their first record on a white label in the near future.

For more information on *Cyber Dream*, turn to page 88. To find out about future Deep Evolution projects, contact Alix Pennycuick on 0827 713458.

W. INDUSTRIES

VIRTUAL REALITY ON THE AMIGA

During 1990, you just couldn't escape the hype surrounding Virtual Reality (VR). Three years later and you could be forgiven for wondering what all the hype was about.



For those unaware, VR is a computer technology that immerses individuals in a 3D computer generated world where powerful software allows the player to play against each other or a computer-controlled opponent. The prime exponent of the technology in this country is W. Industries. Since launching VirtualityTM 1000SD – the world's first VR entertainment system – in March 1991, the company has invented a series of intriguing aracade games to take advantage of the technology.

Either seated within an enclosed 3D environment or wearing a special head mask, the player enters a virtual world where all actions within the environment are controlled by the use of a specially adapted joystick. Held in either hand, the space joystick is tracked by the computer and can appear in the virtual world as anything from a hand to a high tech photon sword.

So what has all this to do with the Amiga, then? Simple, you'll soon be able to experience VR in the comfort of your own home! W. Industries are currently working on a VR-headset designed for use with the Amiga and which should, fingers crossed, be ready sometime in the new year. Price and exact specifications have yet to be finalised but it looks as if the VR revolution is finally upon us.

Apparently, customised VR chips in the head set will help extend the Amiga's already superb polygon-handling routines still further and open up a whole new dimension for 3D games. So hold onto your hats, in a figurative simulated-3D environment kind of way.

BRYAN HOGG

TRAINING SYSTEMS

I was once told that with every squadron of Tornado aircraft the RAF receives comes a squadron of Amigas. Now, I thought that was, at least, an exaggeration and, at most, a bit of a leg-pull. After speaking to Bryan Hogg of Computerised Training Systems I see it was true!

Bryan is the founder and MD of CTS, a company formed in 1988 to design, develop and sell multimedia training systems. Whenever you see multimedia these days you can almost guarantee that there's an Amiga being used in there somewhere and CTS is no exception. Based in Scunthorpe CTS provides Amiga and PC-based training courseware to such prestigious organisations as Rolls-Royce, BAe and, of course, the Ministry of Defence which uses Bryan's multimedia stations to train Tornado maintenance engineers and the aircrew in all aspects of the fighter/bomber. Also, his systems are used for small arms training, interview preparation, civil aircraft training and video titling.

It's not surprising that CTS concentrates on such specialised areas given Bryan's background as an Avionics Engineer in the RAF serving as an Instructor and Officer Commanding at the Harrier Ground Servicing School. From there he moved on to British Aerospace where he was not only responsible for course design of the Tornado Flight Guidance Control, he also introduced them to the Amiga, establishing a specific Amiga-based training centre.



Given the business world's PC fixation and the need to keep the trainee's concentration focussed on the course not the machine, CTS' solutions are very hands-off. That is, interaction with the machine is kept to a minimum with the student using a mouse, joystick, keypad or even touch-screen technology to control a very graphic training package. Bryan believes that it's vital that the hardware should not detract from the courseware in any way. Perhaps that's why he's been so successful in establishing the Amiga so firmly into these difficult markets.

»

» EVELYN GLENNIE

CLASSICAL MUSICIAN



Hidden away in the wilds of Cambridgeshire is the recording studio of the world's foremost classical percussionist. And in the heart of the studio are three Amigas.

Evelyn Glennie is a remarkably talented musician, having graduated from the Royal Academy of Music with a combined degree in both piano and percussion. It is her love of percussion that has become world famous. She has a unique talent for playing anything that needs to be hit, ranging from kettle drums to snares, xylophones to woodblocks, she plays them all, and to watch her play is to be transfixed until the performance is finished.

Her fiancé, Greg Malcangie, in conjunction with Andy Bishop of Blue Ribbon Soundworks have built an entire recording studio around an '040 Amiga 4000 and *Bars & Pipes Pro* software.

The Amiga is linked both to the recording and mixing equipment, and to the instruments and triggering devices via a Triple Play Plus MIDI interface. This excellent interface (another Blue Ribbon innovation) allows the computer to communicate via 48 channels, three times as many as usually permitted under standard MIDI protocols.

This means that Evelyn will play a tune on a controller keyboard and her performance is automatically recorded as a series of MIDI events by *Bars & Pipes* (*B&P*).

Because the controller keyboard is not necessarily capable of producing sounds of its own, *B&P* outputs the MIDI information to a sound module or other instrument.

Having played one part of a performance, Evelyn can then move over to the 13 pad DrumKAT, her MIDI compatible drum kit and play the drum section to accompany the performance which she just recorded. *Bars & Pipes* will automatically add the MIDI information from her drum kit to the keyboard information already stored in memory.

As Greg says, 'The beauty of the *Bars & Pipes Pro* is that it's a completely professional package that anyone can use.'

ALLISTER BRIMBLE

MUSICIAN

It's not all raves and hallucinogenics when it comes to Amiga music. While the popular aspiration is to release a 12" dance record, others are taking a different route. Amiga-veteran Allister Brimble for example, has just released an 11-track CD album.

Allister has been on the Amiga scene for years. He first made a name for himself with a series of PD music demos. His demos had always gone through 17 Bit Software, and when Martin Brown launched the off-shoot games software house Team 17, Allister was firmly in the frame when they needed a musician.

Since then, he's written the soundtracks to such gems as *Alien Breed*, *Project X*, *Assassin* and *Superfrog*. His game soundtracks proved to be so popular, that he decided to re-record a few of his best ones along with some completely new material, which became his debut album Sounds Digital.

To record the CD, Allister used an Amiga 500 running *Music X*, which sequenced a Kurzweil K2000, Korg 01R/W, Yamaha TG77, Akai S950, Alesis SR16 and a Roland D110. Effects and EQ were added with an Alesis Quadraverb, Microverb III, Aphex Aural Exciter, and an Ibanez GE3101 31 band graphic equaliser. As you can imagine, the original game soundtracks just don't compare to the CD remakes. A second CD is in the pipeline.

Allister is currently working on the music and sound effects for Team 17's *Super Sprint*-style *Overdrive*, and an A1200-specific version of *Alien Breed 2*, along with Interplay's *The Lost Vikings* and the *Star Trek 25th Anniversary* game. Then there's the work for the Sega and Nintendo developers. Any music for the consoles has to be entered in assembler, rather than written with a music utility. In other words, all the note pitches, lengths, and data on the sounds themselves have to be entered as a machine code program! To get your mits on the Sounds Digital CD, send a cheque or postal order for £10.99 to: CD OFFER, Hill House, Lapford, Credit on, Devon, EX17 6QE.



SCALA UK

MULTIMEDIA

Scala Multimedia is a multimedia authoring package which can control in real time and at speed a video and an audio source (provided the Amiga running it is fitted with a multi-port serial card), and mix them together with various textual, graphic and audio tricks. Barry Thurston, Managing Director of Scala UK, likens it to a piece of glue. 'It can take the sounds from *Bars & Pipes*, the graphics from *Real 3D*, it can talk to and display on a graphics card and glue them all together into one seamless presentation.'

Infochannel, Scala's big brother and predecessor, came into being in Norway in 1987. A Norwegian friend of the designer, John Bohmer, asked him if he knew of a system that could provide him with a text/graphics channel to give information on his cable TV company. At that time no such thing existed, so John invented it! Infochannel was designed to be a permanently running system that could be updated in background at speed.

After some success with Infochannel and Scala in Scandinavia, John decided to look at exporting it to the UK. He visited Commodore in October 1990 to enquire about distributors and met up with Dennis Phillips and Barry, who were then working for Commodore. At that time there was no one in the UK who could have handled Scala properly so Dennis decided to leave Commodore to set up Scala UK. Barry was to stay on until March 1992 when he decided that he too should devote himself to Scala.

Despite this late start Barry is vocal in his support for his product. 'What we want with Scala is for it to produce something that holds the attention. That is the single most important aspect of multimedia. Fortunately, in the Amiga, we have a piece of hardware that is capable of producing high quality graphics and sound at a reasonable price. When you combine that with Scala you have a truly cost-effective multimedia solution.' Despite this enthusiasm for his product and the medium in which it works, Barry doesn't believe in trying to define multimedia as he believes that the definition rests entirely on what you want to do with it. 'The closest that one can come to an all encompassing, if slightly tongue-in-cheek, definition is by using one of two formulas: PC2D = MM; or, M3T2T2Y = MM. The former is for those people who believe that by sticking a CD ROM drive on a PC you can achieve a multimedia station and the latter is for more enlightened folk who know that the true definition of multimedia is "My multimedia technology tower is taller than yours."'

The big objection that any Amiga-based business tool has to circumvent is that it's not on a PC. Notwithstanding that and Barry's sense of humour, Scala and Infochannel have proved to be a



roaring success in the business world both here and in their native Norway.

In the UK, systems have been installed for Thorn EMI, University College London, some cable TV companies, the Mayfair Hotel in London and the Gleneagles Hotel in Scotland, the RAF, the Bank of Scotland, the Co-op and even the Encyclopaedia Britannica people. Also, virtually every hotel in Scandinavia has an Infochannel screen on the TVs in the bedrooms.

The company as a whole has spread considerably since the early days with permanent offices now in over seven countries and direct distribution in 16.

In addition a company called Scala Inc. has been established in the US to specifically deal with research and development and marketing of new products. It looks like Scala will continue to go from strength to strength. Scala UK can be contacted on 0920 444294.

YOU

AN AMIGA USER

What's this? Why are you here? Well, the idea behind this piece is to give you some idea of just how versatile the Amiga really is. Hopefully we've given you some sort of inspiration to go and do something creative with your Amiga rather than just sit in front of it and play games all the time. Who knows? In a few years time, you could be making a decent living from your hobby! Of course, you already might be doing just that, in which case we'd like to hear from you and feature your work in these very pages.

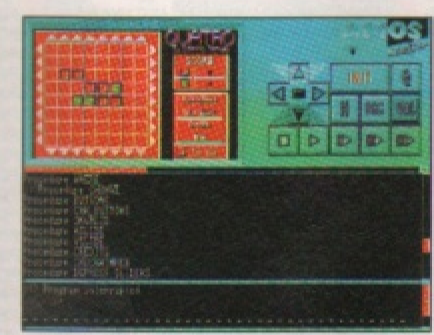
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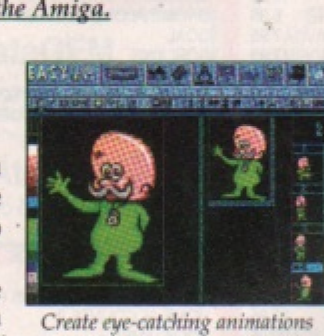

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The result is a package which will more than satisfy home and professional AMOS users. It's fun to use, lots to learn – it's essential for the Amiga.

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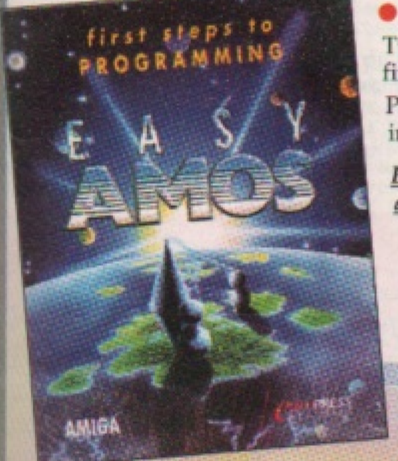
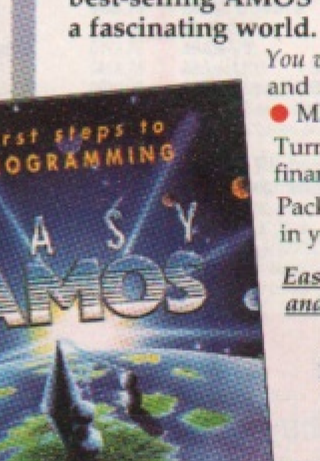
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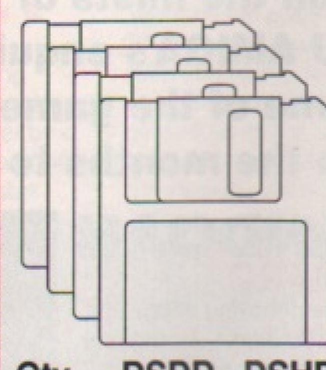
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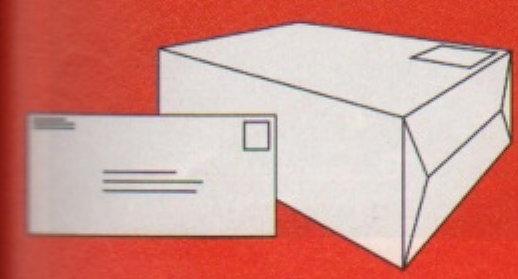
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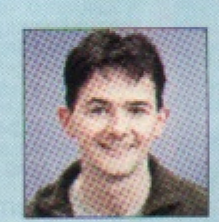
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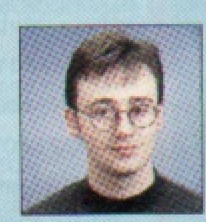
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SCREEN SCENE

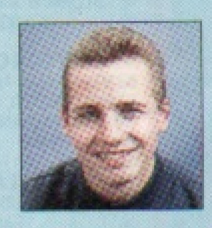
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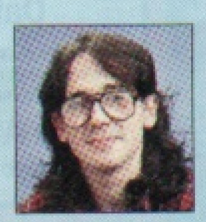
Our glorious leader has become utterly addicted to Dino Dini's *Goal!* Unfortunately, this has meant that everyone else has had to work their fingers to the bone, while Dan hones his joystick wiggling skills. Boo! Hiss!



Before jetting off on his hols, Jon had to go through a series of Hepatitis and Typhoid jabs – this left him completely off his tree and dribbling all over the place, but his writing skills improved no end!



Birthday boy Tony tried to keep his special day a secret from the rest of the CU crew, but we managed to find out and forced him to buy everyone drinks to celebrate.



Now that Jon's on holiday, we're faced with the smelly prospect of CU's own Missing Link coming to work for us for three weeks. Let's hope he has a wash this time...

93% and a game's worth a Superstar. We hardly throw them around, but if a game gets one it'll be completely outstanding.



A CU Screen Star is for games scoring 85%-92%. If a game gets one of these, it'll be of lasting quality.



FIRST

Once again the mists of time dissolve before CU AMIGA's enquiring gaze to reveal some of the games you'll be playing in the months to come.

SHENANDOAH
BLACK LEGEND

Shenandoah is a fast-moving shoot 'em up which looks like it could even out-gun Team 17's *Project X* in terms of firepower, sound effects and polished arcade-style graphics! It's the usual 'take-control-of-a-space-ship-and-blast-anything-that-moves' type of affair, but it's already moving superfast with a silky smooth update and tons of aliens to blast out of the ether. There won't be the usual waves of alien nasties to destroy, either, as each set will be randomly generated and attack in a different formation every time (or so we're promised!). There are also more weapons on display than any other shoot 'em up I can remember. It's planned to have four different classes of weapons, with each class containing seven or so bolt-on bits of hardware. Each of these will also come with three power-levels, activated by in-game power-ups or bought for cash from the end-of-level armoury. Nothing's been decided yet on how many levels the final version of the game will possess, but each one will have an animated end sequence as well as an *Alien Breed*-like sub-game where the player has to successfully land his craft on a runway and run around a maze collecting keys and weapons.



If the gameplay matches these excellent screenshots, then Black Legend are onto a winner here!

There will also be a unique password system, much like that used in the Bitmap Brothers' *Chaos Engine*, whereby codes record your exact state of play, what type of weapons you possessed, how many credits you'd racked up and what power status you had achieved. Best of all, though, is the built in four-player mode so that you and a few friends can either go head-to-head or take on the massed hordes as a team. With ex-demo members from Sanity and Exceed working on this one, you can expect something really special when it's released in a few months' time.



With more hardware than your local ironmongers, *Shenanddah* certainly packs a punch.

IMPRESSIONS

THE LEGACY
MICROPROSE

The Legacy is a 3D role-playing game set within a rambling country mansion that's been taken over by a mysterious entity. Not only that, but he's also invited lots of his mates round too, including flying bat-like creatures, flesh-eating zombies and a variety of hideously mishapen ghouls (a bit like our editor, in fact!). Of course, being a bit on the dim side, you foolishly decide to investigate the eerie goings-on at the house and walk straight into a trap. As the door slams shut behind you, you've got to race through the house's many rooms, corridors and secret passages and make good your escape. With a ghoul waiting behind almost every corner, this isn't going to be particularly easy...

Using the popular first person perspective, a la *Dungeon Master* and *Eye of the Beholder*, the game's been developed by Magnetic Scrolls, the team behind the excellent *Wonderland* graphic adventure. They've managed to cram in more than 100 rooms into the game, plus extra dimensions and hidden levels, as well as all the usual RPG trappings. There's a choice of eight pre-defined characters to chose from at the start of the game, although it's possible to fiddle with their statistics to make them more to your liking. Each character has different strengths, knowledge, dexterity, stamina and will-power ratings, plus secondary skills such as the ability to meditate or use fire arms that are related to the first set of stats.

If you haven't got an A1200, then you're going to miss out on one hell of a game.



Magnetic Scrolls are back, Back, BACK, with their first game in ages, the seriously spooky *The Legacy*!

In all, there are more than 25 diffrent types of monster to slay or maim and some of these look very impressive indeed.

The Amiga conversion won't lose anything from its PC counterpart, as it's going to be an A1200-specific release. This means we'll be treated to 256 colour graphics and there's the possibility of enhanced sound effects, too. If you've seen some of the screen shots from the game in any of the PC mags, you'll know you're in for a treat – some of the monsters are especially gruesome-looking. If you thought Horrorsoft's *Wax Works* was terrifying, just wait until you see some of the macabre characters that are walking around in *The Legacy*!

Interestingly, Magnetic Scrolls have kept to the 'windows' based design of *Wonderland*, although the system has been significantly refined for the new game. The user can pre-configure the screen to their own liking – for instance, you might want to have a moderately large playing window with auto-mapping, text and inventory panels placed immediately below. However, if you're more interested in the game's graphics, it's possible to have a full-screen view of the proceedings, or reduce this facility to a quarter of its size.

A release date has yet to be set for the game, although it looks likely that it'll be a Christmas release. We'll have a further update soon.









If you want to get an idea how flexible the windows system is for the main screen, just take a look at the different layouts pictured above.

MORPH
MILLENNIUM

After a disastrous teleportation experiment young Morris Rolph, Morph to his friends, has been turned into an amorphous cloud of atoms. The only way for him to return to a solid, boyish state is to take a trip through the teleportation machine again. Unfortunately, a large bolt of lightning has blown the thing to bits and spread the pieces across the country. Yes, you guessed it, it's your job to help Morph find the machine parts that'll turn him back to normal.



If it's platform antics of a very strange kind indeed you're after then wait until you read our review of Morph next issue!

The game is a puzzler with the poor kid having to negotiate all sorts of obstacles to find the parts. Not too difficult you might think, but you'd be wrong! *Morph* has been left with just enough bodily control to transform himself into one of four states – gas, liquid, flexible and solid. The tricky thing is that he has an extremely limited number of changes available at any one time. So, you have to work out some way of reaching the end AND collecting the part without running out of changes. All of which has to be done within a time limit.



From what we've seen *Morph* is looking pretty good. If you ask nicely we'll have a full review next month.

»

» # THE SETTLERS
BLUE BYTE

Despite sounding like it should be kept in the bathroom cabinet rather than a disk drive, *The Settlers* is the latest in a long line of 'god' games. It's basically a cross between *Sim City* and *Megalomania* in that you must build up a thriving community, commission an army and then invade a neighbour's territory. However, for my money, it's a lot more involved than either game, with each citizen being given a specific job to do. These range from being assigned to the bakery to running



Camberwick Green meets *Sim City*!



The Settlers is not just a game of computer conquest – there's the chance to start your own bakery business too!

the local butchers or saw mill – it's a little bit like the computer equivalent of Camberwick Green, in fact. When you consider that each city/kingdom can comprise a maximum of 64,000 citizens you can see that it'll take all your time just to keep everyone in full-time employment.

The sim is set in Medieaval times, which is reflected in the type of dwellings that can be built, plus the range of armaments available. The first thing to do is construct a castle – this acts as an HQ and defines the length and breadth of your kingdom by placing stone bolders all around the periphery. These can be pushed further and further afield by sending troops to the further most outposts of your territory and constructing small garrisons.

The game involves a complex bartering system with various flow charts used to show the distribution of goods and services. At the start, you'll find yourself with a finite supply of raw materials, so you must build up a manufacturing base quickly. Everything is mouse-controlled from a bank of icons at the bottom of the screen, with a useful fast-forward option once the wheels of commerce are set in motion.

Blue Byte plan to include 60 pre-designed levels, which will throw up a number of different challenges, from plagues and natural disasters, to famines and aggressive warlords. It's also planned to include a randomly generated map to keep things from getting dull. Players will be able to choose either a one-player mode against up to three computer opponents or a two-player simultaneous option played against one or two computer players.



Establish a small garrison, and the boundaries of your kingdom start to grow

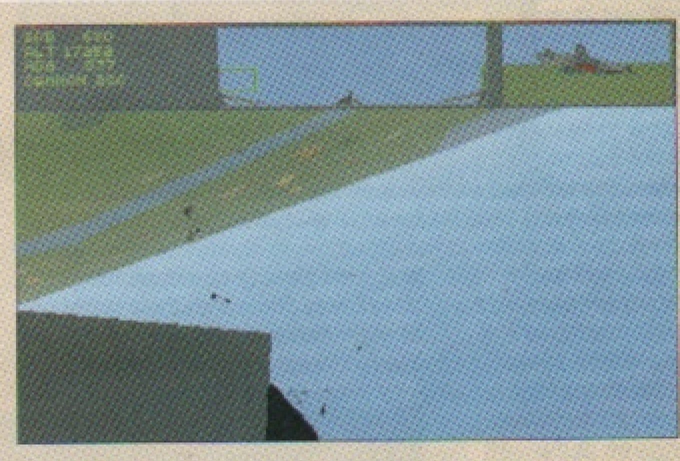
DOGFIGHT
MICROPROSE

Fancy pitting an F-16A Fighting Falcon against a World War One Sopwith Camel? How about a Sea Harrier against a Spitfire? Both these options and many more besides are on offer in Microprose's latest combat flight sim. *Dogfight*, as the name suggests, is an air to air combat sim in which the player can select one of 12 different aeroplanes ranging from the aforementioned Sopwith Camels and Spitfires right up to F15 combat jets. Once pre-flight training has been completed, it's up, up and away into the shiny blue yonder as you pit early World War I and World War II planes against the technology of modern jet fighters.

Will heat seeking missiles be able to lock onto bi-planes or can a Spitfire out manoeuvre a combat equipped Tornado? Now you'll be able to find out.

As well as the dogfighting elements of the game, there will also be the opportunity to fly a series of missions.

To make the game accessible, Microprose have kept the controls simple, so all you'll need is a pair of goggles, a reliable joystick and awwaaaaay you go! Expect an ETA before the end of this year.



If you want to experience the thrills and spills of air-to-air combat, join the airforce. If, however, you're the more peaceful sort, then *Dogfight* is a much safer option.



Fancy pitting this aging relic against the likes of an F-16A Fighting Falcon? Thought not.



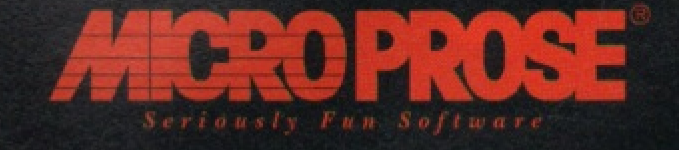
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DIGITAL IMAGE DESIGN

Having just secured a million pound contract with Ocean Software, DID look set to take the Amiga market by storm once again. CU AMIGA takes a long, hard look...





DID don't like to do things by halves. Take a look at their pedigree. *Falcon* shot to number one, blasting Electronic Arts' *Interceptor* out of the skies. A couple of years later, *F-29 Retaliator* stormed the Amiga market, with the fastest vectors ever seen in a flight simulation. Now, in 1993, they've moved into overdrive.

In last December's issue of CU AMIGA, we ran a feature on the then newly released A1200. On the subject of flight simulations, we made a prediction that some thought was a tad optimistic: 'It could be time to kiss goodbye to the barren green plains, triangular mountains and paper darts that have been the hallmarks of flight sims for the past decade. Say hello to speedy light-sourced, texture-m apped F-15s, rolling countryside and fractal clouds.' Amazingly, that's exactly what DID are serving up.



If you can imagine *Elite*, crossed with *Starglider II*, with a load of extra goodies, you're getting close to what *Odyssey*'s about.



Welcome to the first truely amazing A1200 game. *Inferno* is being developed for the AGA Amigas only – 500 owners, get saving!

AGA-DO

The bad news for all you owners of non-AGA machines is that both *Inferno* and *Odyssey* are being developed for the 1200 and 4000 only. However, one man's loss is indeed another man's gain, and if you're lucky enough to own an AGA Amiga, you're in for something pretty special.

Developing exclusively for the 1200 and 4000 wouldn't be a particularly safe financial move at the moment, until the 1200 replaces the 500 as the main Amiga in the home. Fortunately, DID have sorted out a development plan that means they can produce the VGA PC version and the 1200/4000 games simultaneously. All the program code is written in C, an extremely portable language, which means that almost exactly the same code can be used on both PC and Amiga. Re-routing any sub-routines to get the best from the Amiga's own custom chips is easily done.

WHY THE 1200?

Speed has always been a feature of DID's games, but it has come at a price. With 3D games, there's an inevitable trade-off between graphic detail and speed. In the past, DID have gone for speed rather than detail, but this time they wanted both, and then some! The 1200 and 4000 were the only Amigas that could make it all possible.

EDITORS

To streamline the development of both *Odyssey* and *Inferno*, DID have created their own set of editors. There's one for creating missions, another for objects, another for planets and landscapes, one for character animations and so on. The result is that after the editors have been written, there's very little coding to be done. All the main routines are there, so the team are free to concentrate on the all-important graphics and gameplay. This approach seems to be working – we witnessed no scenes of irate programmers pulling their hair out in frustration. In fact, they seem to be more concerned about what tape gets played on the office stereo than anything else.

The obvious use for editors is object design, although DID's object editor is surprisingly basic. Most of the data for planes and buildings is entered as strings of co-ordinates, which are then turned into solid 3D chunks by the display routines.

If you're easily bored with the built-in missions on most flight sims, you'll be pleased to know that DID will be including the mission editor in the release version of *Inferno*, so you can create your own scenarios.

INFERNO

Inferno is going to be the most stunning flight simulation the Amiga has ever seen. No, that's not a quote from DID boss Martin Kenwright, it's actually our own opinion. Compared to this, the competition is in the dark ages. It makes *Birds of Prey* look like a game of *Space Invaders*. Rash claims? Not a bit of it.

128 COLOURS

Innovation number one is the use of the new AGA graphics modes. VGA PCs use a 256-colour bitmapped display, which is very convenient, because the 1200 has a very similar mode itself, although a concession to speed has meant that the Amiga version will run in 128 colours. For one thing, the massive palette eliminates the coarse stippling effect that's normally used to simulate different shades.

We've all played flight sims with that common blue sky and flat green land, but *Inferno* uses the extra colours to produce a realistic horizon, with various degrees of haze depending on the weather conditions and the time of day or night. Another clever use of the 128 colours, is the distant blur effect. Not only does this make distant objects look more realistic, but also it cuts down the unnecessary detail, which keeps it all flowing smoothly, and overcomes Retaliator's problem of objects suddenly popping into view.

Arming your fighter is easier than falling off a log book. Just click and drag, as they say.



Runways are numbered according to their orientation – runway 29 is at compass bearing 290°.



VIRTUAL TEXTURES

Another Amiga first is the texture mapping. Sure, 3D rendering programs have incorporated texture »

NAME: Nevil Plura
AGE: 32
POSITION: Senior programmer on PC, 3DO and Nintendo
COMPUTER HISTORY: Over 10 years' general programming experience including writing the PC engine for *Gold of the Aztecs*.
HOBBIES: Snooker, DIY, swimming and looking after his family. Maybe it's got something to do with his age.

CAMERA, AND... ACTION!

It would be criminal to let all these flashy visual tricks go to waste. DID have gone for maximum visual impact by including a bucketload of different views. We've all seen exterior views in flight sims, but those of *Inferno* are much more convincing, mainly because of one very simple detail. Normally, the camera would follow the plane exactly, as if it were attached to it somehow. However, in *Inferno*, the camera and plane both bob independently of each other, but only very slightly. The result is subtly different, with a slight parallax effect, but it's far more realistic.

It's not only your own plane that's a pleasure to watch. A professional aeronautical engineer was drafted in to help out with the flight dynamics, and it shows. The outside loops, barrel rolls and Immelman turns of the enemy are silky smooth.



NAME: Ian Boardman
AGE: 27
POSITION: Vector Graphic Designer/Co-ordinator
COMPUTER HISTORY: *Epic*, *Robocop 3*
HOBBIES: Philosophy, literature, acid jazz, country walks and the Arts.



ART AND DESIGN

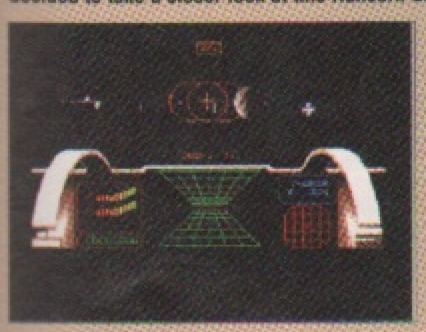
The biggest single deal in software history was recently signed between Ocean and Digital Image Design. Ocean has agreed to hand over £1 million in staged payments to DID for exclusive rights to their next six products. Gary Bracey, Ocean's Software Director, has said that DID are 'without question the leading light in 3D games development' and that the deal will enable Ocean 'to make serious in-roads into the future of CD gaming.'

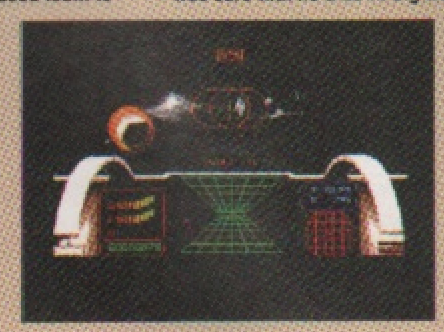
These are big claims to make about anyone, so we decided to take a closer look at this Runcorn-based team to find out whether they're really worth it or not.

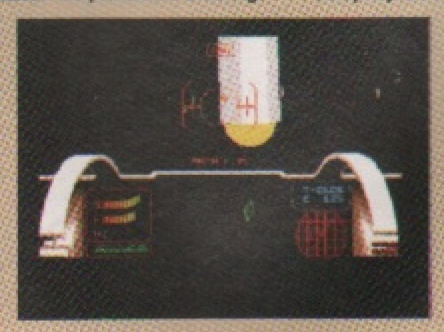
ROOTS

Digital Image Design is headed up by Martin Kenwright, a large Scouser who looks like an amalgam of all four Beatles (who, surprisingly, figure greatly in his record collection), and who has plenty of the natural warmth that is associated with Liverpudlians. DID can effectively trace their origins back to the day that Martin was in his A level maths class. Being bored with the current lesson he decided to make a few doodles of his teacher. Of course they were less than flattering so when the teacher came over and saw them he was sure that he'd be in big trouble. 'He picked the drawing up and I thought 'this is it' but he had a good laugh about it. But then he asked me to stay behind after class and I thought I was really in for it. However he liked my work so much that he asked me to draw some graphics for a game that he was designing. The game was *Strike Force Harrier* on the Atari ST. There was an artist in London who had been working on it but couldn't do it any more. At that time I had never seen a mouse never mind an ST but I ended up drawing quite a bit, in particular all the MiGs.' It took Martin just one weekend to draw the planes despite his lack of computer experience. The game itself sold well on the ST and suddenly Martin could see a blossoming career in computer art.

The next stage was a job offer from Rowan Software, a company famous for their flight sims. He became a trainee »





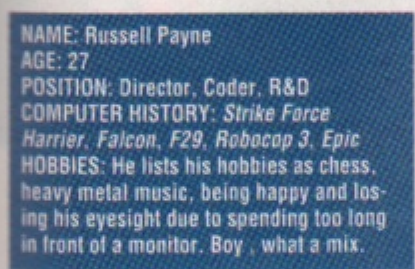






Some of the most realistic views are from the stunning virtual cockpit mode.

Mid-air refueling as seen from the virtual cockpit – docking with the pod isn't easy!



NAME: Russell Payne
AGE: 27
POSITION: Director, Coder, R&D
COMPUTER HISTORY: *Strike Force Harrier, Falcon, F29, Robocop 3, Epic*
HOBBIES: He lists his hobbies as chess, heavy metal music, being happy and losing his eyesight due to spending too long in front of a monitor. Boy, what a mix.

mapping for years, but they can take hours to draw a single frame. Even the best demo coders haven't quite got to grips with realtime texture mapping, but DID have got it sussed.

Texture mapping is a clever combination of vector and bitmapped graphics. The texture map itself is like a poster, which is pasted onto the surface of a 3D vector object. It takes a lot of processing power, but if you can get it running fast enough, it's extremely effective.

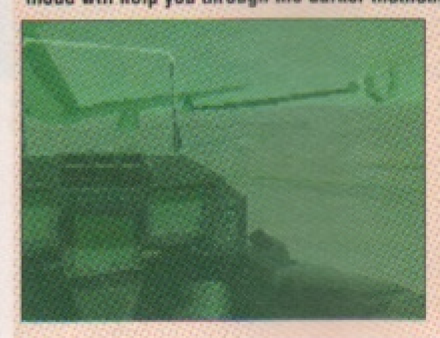
With these new routines, DID have developed what they call their 'Virtual Cockpit'. From outside the plane, you can zoom in on the pilot and right into the cockpit! Once you're in Virtual Cockpit mode, you can look around just as you would in reality (virtually). The inside of the cockpit and the control panel are all texture mapped, and the results are amazingly realistic. In fact, this is just one of the reasons why DID have been asked to develop a professional flight simulator to train real pilots! More texture mapping is used in small touches like the UN logo on the tail of the plane, and all going well, it should also be evident on some of the buildings.

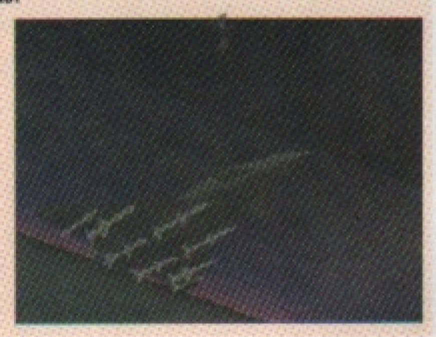
THE REAL WORLD

Have you had enough of games set in Simulationland? You know the place, where mountains are like bright green pyramids, the sky is »

24 HOUR CALLOUT

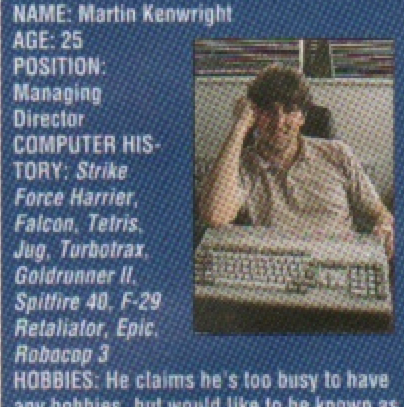
It's no nine-to-five job when you're a top fighter pilot in the middle of a raging war. DID are making sure they cram as much realism as they can into Inferno by simulating different times of day. Apart from the normal daytime missions, there'll be others that need to be flown at dawn and sunset, and in the middle of the night. A simulated infra-red night vision mode will help you through the darker moments.





NAME: Jamie Cansdale
AGE: 19
POSITION: Programmer
COMPUTER HISTORY: *Robocop 3*, and the 3D shape editor and world editor for upcoming games.
HOBBIES: Psychedelic experimenter, cosmologist, evolutionist, listening to the Shamen and communing with Gaia. Oh and telling porkies to journalists who're compiling information panels.

NAME: Martin Kenwright
AGE: 25
POSITION: Managing Director



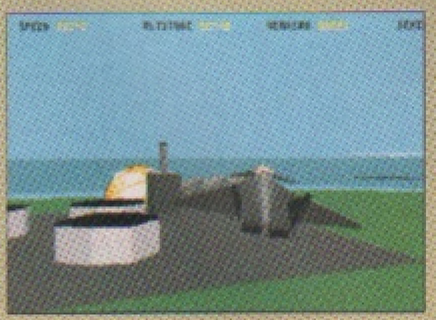
COMPUTER HISTORY: *Strike Force Harrier, Falcon, Tetris, Jug, Turbotrax, Goldrunner II, Spitfire 40, F-29 Retaliator, Epic, Robocop 3*
HOBBIES: He claims he's too busy to have any hobbies, but would like to be known as the one who's into any form of over indulgence, physical abuse and fast driving.

designer and it was there that he met Colin Bell and Russell Payne, who are now with him at DID. It was a good grounding in graphic art as he was exposed to various different games. 'I worked on the PC conversion of *Strike Force Harrier*, as well as *Spitfire 40*, bits of *Tetris*, and the *Falcon* conversion. But as I was still quite young I didn't really get the opportunities that I believed I should have so I left. I looked around for another job and got involved with a company that was going to do some work for Ocean. Unfortunately, it didn't get off the ground but at least I had a foot in the door with them. I had an idea at that time for a flight sim which would be a bit more arcadey than the rest so I approached Gary Bracey at Ocean and asked them if they wanted to get involved. Within 20 minutes of my suggesting the idea Gary got me a cheque for £20,000.' That shows just how much confidence Martin inspires in his abilities as an artist. But the big problem for him now was how to put this game together in less than a year, especially considering he didn't have anyone to help him. He called on his old Rowan colleague, Russell, who he was eager to help. 'With all our experience at Rowan behind us we realised that in order to make the game successful we would need to generate a whole new type of 3D technology so we spent six months just designing the engine around which the game would be built. After we'd sorted that out the game itself only took a further six months to do.' That game became the smash hit *F-29 Retaliator*, which succeeded despite a minor promotional mistake. 'We were planning on calling it *F-22 Retaliator*, but unfortunately someone in marketing at Ocean cocked-up, so it ended up as *F-29*.'

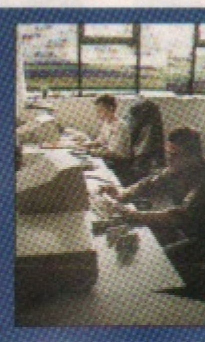
DOUBLE DEALING

At the same time as he secured the first Ocean deal Martin also sold an idea for a space game to Microdeal. He wanted to work on a pseudo-sequel to one of Microdeal's earlier hits called *Goldrunner*. Martin's idea was for a 3D version of that game. John Symes from Microdeal decided to go with it and Martin was left with the hard task of bringing in two 3D games with a skeleton staff. It's a measure of all their commitment and skill that that game turned out to be an even bigger hit than *F-29*. It became, of course, *Epic*. 'It really only started out as a hobby of a game. All we wanted was a few spaceships to fly around and shoot but it evolved so much that we almost ran out of money. It became such a big game that in the meantime we had started and finished *Robocop 3* which was well received but not very profitable for us because of all the licensing deals involved.' When *Epic* was released it was not an instant success due to the gameplay being rather too easy in places. Martin was not happy about this but felt that technically at least they had achieved something. »









NAME: Dave Dixon
AGE: 20
POSITION: Head of Amiga Development
COMPUTER HISTORY: *Robocop 3*
HOBBIES: Horror fiction, long walks and running... away from hard work.

» always blue, and clouds look like UFOs. Inferno takes place in an altogether more believable world. Instead of solitary mountains sprinkled around a flat plain, you get proper mountain ranges, with convincingly-shaded valleys, snow-capped peaks and foothills.

This is what flying a fighter is all about – darting down a valley in pursuit of an enemy, braking hard and banking to avoid the looming walls of granite, before ducking over the other side and into safe airspace.

Then there are the clouds. If you happen to be out in overcast weather, you can fly up through the cloud base, and emerge from the fog to see the bubbly cloud tops below, and the clear blue sky above.

In fact, you could quite easily forget the gameplay, the missions, the strategy, and just take your plane out for pleasure flights around the world, exploring the mountain ranges of South America and the natural splendour of Central Europe. A pilot's life for me...

NINE FLOPPIES

At the moment, it's looking like Inferno will come on nine floppy disks. That's not such good news for anyone without a hard drive, but if you do have one, you'll be relieved to hear that it WILL be hard disk installable. There will also be a CD-ROM version released at some time, although at present there are no CD drives for the AGA Amigas. Commodore promise one for the 1200 'before Christmas', but the rumoured 1200-based CD console will probably hit the streets first.



Twilight missions have an eerie atmosphere all of their own.

ODYSSEY



NAME: Colin Bell
AGE: 25
POSITION: Head of Development
COMPUTER HISTORY: *Spitfire 40, Strike Force Harrier, Falcon, Flight of the Intruder, Reach for the Skies, Epic, Robocop 3*
HOBBIES: Playing the guitar, driving and walking. [Sounds suspiciously like he's trying to fill his C.V. with interesting topics – Ed.]



ALIEN SEX FIEND

As far as space shoot 'em ups go, music is usually more of an afterthought rather than an intergral part of the game design, but not so with *Odyssey*.

Another example of DID's ambitious approach is *Odyssey*'s soundtrack. Instead of just writing four-channel soundtracks, they've enlisted the talents of Alien Sex Fiend, who are currently composing some epic atmospheres and tunes. Top notch studio equipment is being used in an attempt to come up with the best ever Amiga game soundtrack, and so far it's sounding pretty tasty.

The original tracks will be recorded straight to CD for the CD-ROM version, but it's going to be an uphill struggle to convert them to four-channel tracks for the floppy-based game.

It's fantasy all the way with *Odyssey*, so you can still go around blowing everything up with outrageously powerful weapons, but you don't get the guilt trip of having just destroyed a whole city of innocent people.

Your local solar system has gradually been taken over by a massive corporation, which has appointed itself ruler of the spaceways. You've taken it upon yourself to spearhead the revolution. What this all adds up to is plenty of zipping from planet to planet, liberating colonies, blowing up enemy installations, and generally pretending to be Buck Rogers. Got the idea?

COMIC TOUCHES

They're into comics in quite a big way at DID, but the interest goes

» 'On a technical level it was really pretty amazing with 400 interactive starships plus different worlds and the like. Looking back on it now it seems pretty dated as the game engine is now obsolete. With every game we've learnt a lesson and improved on the engine. It's not a question of abandoning it, rather it's an evolutionary process; with *Odyssey* and *Inferno* we're on our fourth generation of 3D engine. Advances in technology have allowed us to develop a huge networked system with 20,000 files on and a gigabyte of data just for the 3D shapes.'

DREAM COME TRUE

Martin's tale may seem like a dream come true for many budding artists and programmers but it's not been easy. 'It has been a struggle. We really did get into some compromising positions by running late on a few projects. A lot of it was due to internal changes at DID but we believe that things are sorted out now.

'You've got to understand that we weren't doing sprite-based games and by choosing to concentrate on 3D games we were biting off more than we could chew. Fortunately we had great support from Ocean who continued to pay us despite the over runs.'

Martin has a lot of respect for Ocean as he sees it as the only UK publisher with any vision. 'I've always said that for the British software industry to succeed it has got to be backed up by big bucks. If you want to see really fantastic games you've got to be prepared to invest in their development. Ocean has been the only publisher that is prepared to put their money were their mouth is.' One million pounds may seem like a huge amount but when you consider that a decent 3D game can cost around £250,000 to develop you can see that it isn't that great.

DID's next step is to consider establishing a label for themselves. 'We've built up a good reputation in Europe but in the UK we've been rather overshadowed by Ocean's name. What I'd like is for us to be seen as being affiliated to Ocean rather than as part of them.' Everything's coming good for DID at the moment. Going on their past successes, and with Martin's drive, we're sure that they will achieve whatever they set out to do.



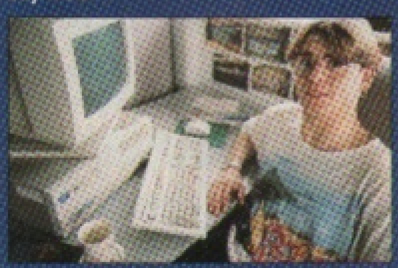


Far left: Suedehead brushes up his marksmanship in *Robocop III*.
Left: the ninja confrontation scene from *Robocop III*.



In space, near misses become close encounters. This one was lucky to avoid instant death in a mid-space collision.

NAME: Andee Gahan
AGE: 20
POSITION: Graphic Artist
COMPUTER HISTORY: None
HOBBIES: Eating snacks, playing lead guitar in a band, producing original T-shirts and using Kung Fu to persuade people to buy them.



NAME: Rob Ball
AGE: 20
POSITION: Graphic Artist/Animator
COMPUTER HISTORY: *Epic*, *Robocop 3*
HOBBIES: Painting, sculpting, comic art, short people, long animals and leafy trees. Rob has been a person for as long as he can remember, and in fact claims to have been born that way. Rob gets all aggitated if people call him Bobby (he hates football).

way beyond just reading them. For *Odyssey*, they've created their own comic. They wanted a strong storyline that would give the game plenty of atmosphere, but most people can't even be bothered to read the first page of instructions, let alone a mini-novel. The solution is to include a scene-setting comic, which should entice the laziest gamers.

MASS DESTRUCTION

Under the surface, *Odyssey* and *Inferno* are very similar, but with *Odyssey* it looks as if the emphasis is going to be firmly on action. There will certainly be adventure and strategy elements, but if it carries on the way it is, you won't be short-changed when it comes to gratuitous alien wasting! The same technology that's being used to create the spookily real world of Inferno is also being used to create the spookily unreal solar system of *Odyssey*. CU

A power station is a sitting duck – with all the enemy ships destroyed, it's had its chips.

Making a hasty getaway from the strike-zone is essential to avoid the pursuit craft.

NAME: Paul Hollywood
AGE: 20
POSITION: Vector Graphic Designer/Co-ordinator
COMPUTER HISTORY: *Epic*, *Robocop 3*, *Odyssey*.
HOBBIES: Clubbing, cultural and artistic enlightenment and playing computer games.

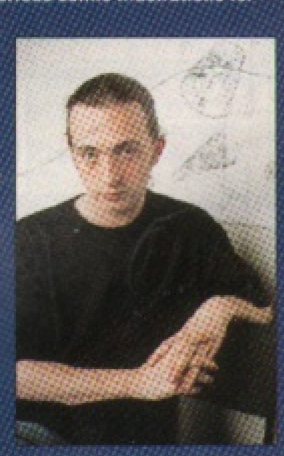
NAME: Andy Bate
AGE: 20
POSITION: Vector Graphic Designer
COMPUTER HISTORY: None
HOBBIES: None, apart from drinking, comics, drinking, playing on his Megadrive and then going out for even more drinking.

SOFT IN THE HEAD

When it comes to animating some inter-level character shots, most would just knock up a few screens in *DPaint*, but not DID. Determined to get everything as slick as possible, they built their own alien heads from Plasticine. These were then digitised, and animated with their own custom-designed morphing software.



NAME: Shaun Hollywood
AGE: 26
POSITION: Art Director, Game Designer for *Odyssey*
COMPUTER HISTORY: *Robocop 3*, two mainstream commercial animations – Smarties commercial and Access 'per-centages'.
HOBBIES: Art appreciation, reading and clubbing. Apparently Shaun has also worked on various comic illustrations for Fleetway, as well as designing stuff for TV, including Grange Hill, C4 titles and 7 Sport. Oh, and he drives very, very fast as a rather nauseous Jon and Tony can testify.



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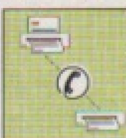


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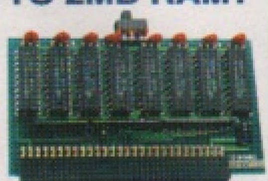
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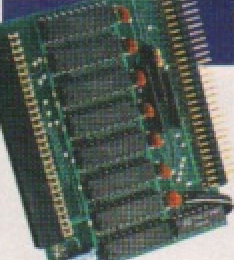


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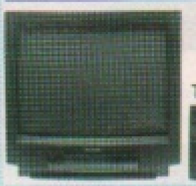


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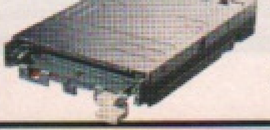


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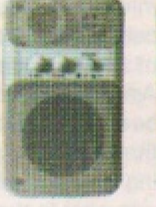
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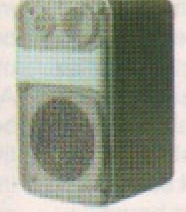
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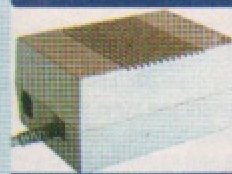




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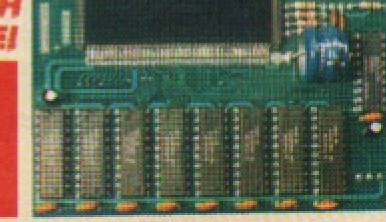
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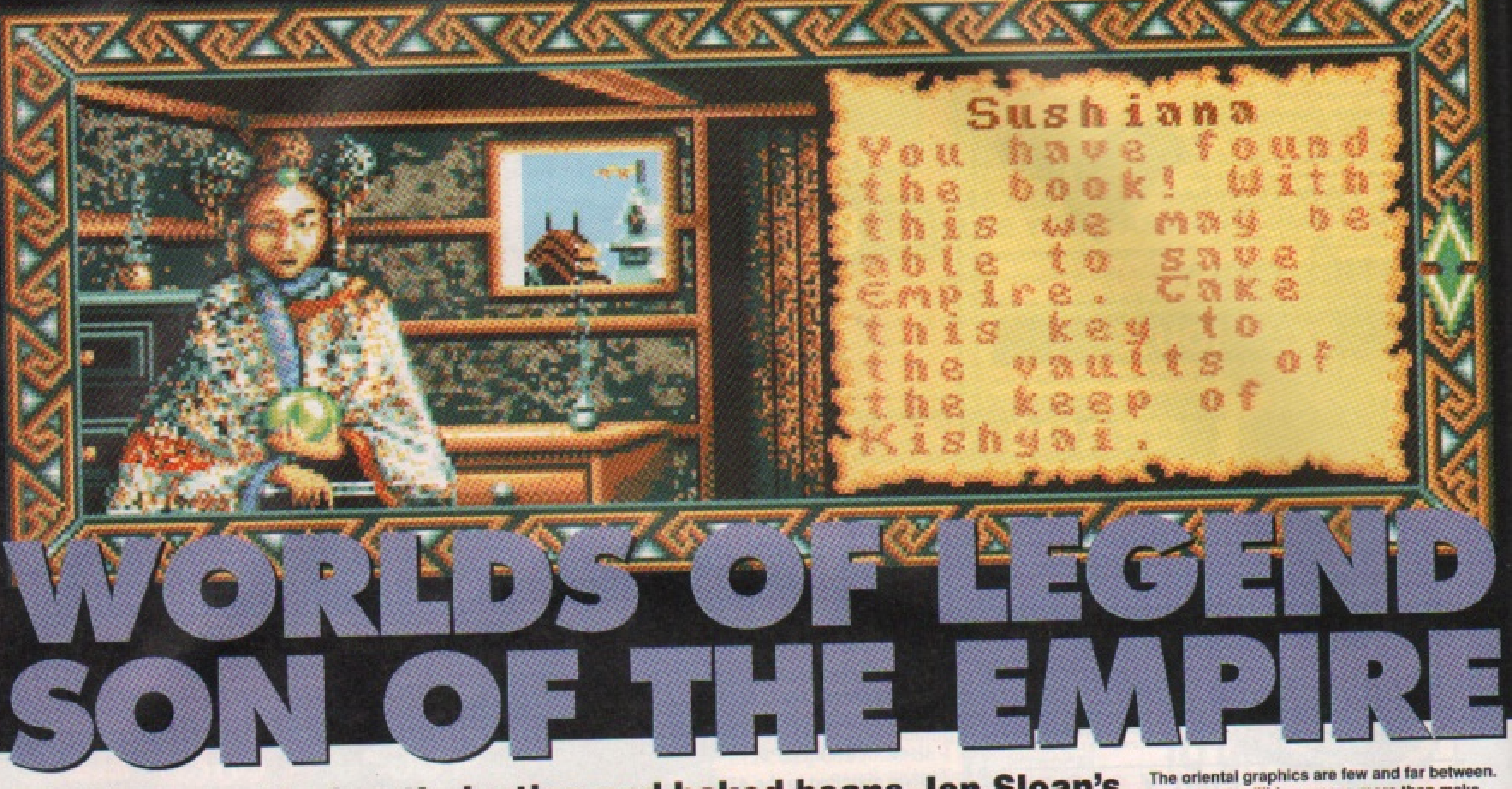
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WORLDS OF LEGEND SON OF THE EMPIRE

In the pursuit of truth, justice and baked beans Jon Sloan's travelled to some funny places, but none stranger than the Empire of the Moon. Here's his guided tour to a land overrun by chaos and plagued by monsters with an attitude.





It's funny sometimes how really good games can appear without all the attendant showboating that comes with major releases. That's exactly what happened when the original *Legend* first appeared. It was released to lukewarm reviews but soon became a cult classic. As one of the many fans of *Legend* it was with some pleasure that I greeted the arrival of its semi-sequel, *Son of the Empire*.

Empire has been released as a stand-alone expansion for the original but it is, in effect, a brand new game. It puts you once more in control of the Berserker, the Assassin, the Troubadour and the Runemaster in their quest to bring order from chaos. These characters each have unique abilities, like the Assassin who can turn invisible and the Troubadour whose songs boost the party's stats. It's the Runemaster and his spells, though, that make *Empire* really special (see the Spells R Us panel below).

The oriental graphics are few and far between. However, the fill-in screens more than make up for any lack elsewhere.

THE PLOT THICKENS

The game carries on where *Legend* left off with your band of four adventurers celebrating after defeating the minions of chaos in Trazere. That celebration is cut short by the arrival of a messenger with news that the Assassin's father, the Emperor, has been murdered by an aide and the throne is being sought by four feuding warlords. Wasting no time you ride east to the Imperial castle to be greeted by Aunt Sushiana. She informs you that the murderer is hiding in the vaults beneath the palace and you have to root him out.

This tale sets the scene for the

SPELLS R US

The spell system is the one thing that lifts *Legend/Empire* above its competitors. It's the very complexity of it that makes it special. To get a spell to work you need to know and then combine various runes and ingredients then link them chain-like into one bigger spell. This makes it possible for you to invent any kind of spell you want, so long as it comes within certain guidelines.

The manual is deliberately vague when it comes to spellcasting. Apart from the fact that you don't get all the runes you need immediately you aren't even told how to combine them. Fortunately CU Amiga is here to help with some useful spell combinations.

- Missile rune + wing of bat = missile spell
- Damage rune + brimstone = damage spell
- Healing rune + hedjog venom = healing spell
- Surround rune + nightshade = surround spell
- Dispel rune + dragon's tooth = dispel magic
- Antimage rune + nightshade + dragon's tooth = antimage spell
- Thrall rune + nightshade + mandrake = thrall spell

For a spell combination direct from the programmers try this – mix surround and missile and damage and surround and damage and missile and finally, damage. This is the magical equivalent of an all out nuclear attack. It can be made more powerful by adding extra damage components. Don't forget to antimage the party first or you'll be sorry.



Use a combination of runes and magic ingredients to create stunning spells.

GET TOOLED UP

Son of the Empire becomes progressively more difficult the deeper you get into the game. Initially the monsters you meet are pretty easy to trash and the puzzles can be readily solved. But, after trawling through these earlier dungeons and vaults under the Imperial Palace, you'll find that the later locations are pretty tough. Fortunately help is at hand in the form of magical items. They come in many forms from simple damage inflicting helmets that strike the tile in front of you to handy magically protective rings. They can be obtained by careful searching, by purchase from an Artificer or simply by picking them up once you've defeated their current owners. The problem is that they're often one shot only and you can't tell what they do till you try them. Well fear no more for here's a definitive list of the most common magic items and their uses.



Above: As you can see the screen soon fills with nasties but it never slows down. Sometimes you can lose a member before you know it.

Right: This cloud of red gas represents a huge damage spell. Make sure that the rest of the party is far away before you trigger it.

Above: The programmers have thoughtfully included an auto-mapping function. Click on the dragon to reveal it.

Each character has his own set of statistics which will be improved as you progress.

first 'trainer' dungeon which, despite the fact it's supposed to be basic, soon gets pretty hairy. The magician at the end of it is particularly tough and requires umpteen hacks and magical blasts before he gives up the ghost. Once he's been sorted you soon realise how massive the game is, as Sushiana informs you that in order to reunite the realm you'll have to travel to its four corners to collect four shards of an amulet. Apparently it's needed to awaken the eternal champion who's the only force strong enough to defeat the warlords.

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

The main action takes place in one of the seven isometric dungeons/vaults that are hidden beneath various towns and shrines. You travel to them across a fractal map, whilst desperately trying to avoid the roving warlord's armies as an encounter with one can result in a quick death for the unprepared. Once a vault is reached it's straight into it for some exploration and dungeon bashing.

The screen is dominated by an isometric display of the dungeon environment whilst surrounding it are various icons showing your characters, a map-making dragon, a satchel for the inventory and various plinths on which stand any magical items that you're wearing. This system is very easy to learn as it only needs one click to access the inventory, change leaders or use a magic item.

It's fortunate that the control system is so easy as, once battle ensues, the action is extremely fast. Monsters attack from all directions and destructive spells whiz around and explode in graphic detail. Even with all this going on there's no apparent loss of speed, which is quite an achievement. Perhaps this is due to the simplicity of the graphics which, though workman-like, fail to alter much from dungeon to dungeon. With the oriental setting it's a shame that the designers didn't take the opportunity to really revamp the backgrounds. Apart from the odd item here and there the graphics are very similar to the original. Also, the sound effects and tunes soon become irritating in their repetition.

That said, even the sound and graphic simplicity cannot detract from the addictive gameplay. I even had to be forcibly dragged away from my monitor to write this review! Once you start *Empire* you'll soon be dragged in so far that it's hard to stop. The scenario is realistic, the action thick and fast and the magic system without equal. This game is one of the most believable and playable RPGs to date. CU

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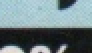
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RELEASE DATE:	JUNE 1993
GENRE:	RPG
TEAM:	IN HOUSE
CONTROLS:	MOUSE
NUMBER OF DISKS:	2
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	NO
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	81%
LASTABILITY	92%
PLAYABILITY	96%

❛ One of the best role-players on the Amiga. ❜



OVERALL 90%


CLOUD HELM – This item teleports its wearer onto whatever square you click on.


HOLY HELM – This causes all enemies in the surrounding eight squares to see the light and convert to good for the duration of the battle.

GOLD HELM – Another useful hat as it regenerates its wearer's hit points.

CHAOS HELM – Perhaps the most useful helm of all, it allows the wearer to re-vivify his companions.

BATTLE HORN – The Troubadour will go mad for this musical instrument, it allows him to berserk like the Barbarian.


ANGEL HELM – An Assassin's dream this. Pop it on and he'll speed into battle and teleport wherever he wants to go.

SERPENT SHIELD – The most special magic item of all heals all your hit points to full capacity no matter how high their maximum is.

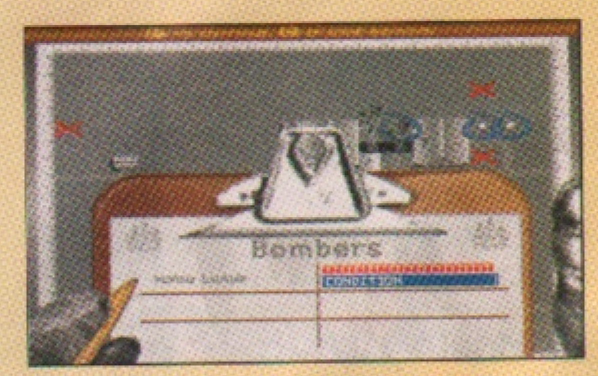

GOLD POTION – Like the effects of the Gold Helm, if you drink this you'll feel a lot better.

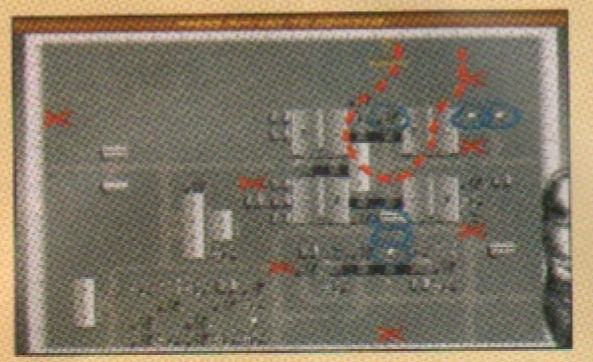

BRONZE POTION – Give this drink to any warrior and he'll soon be steaming into battle like the legends of old.

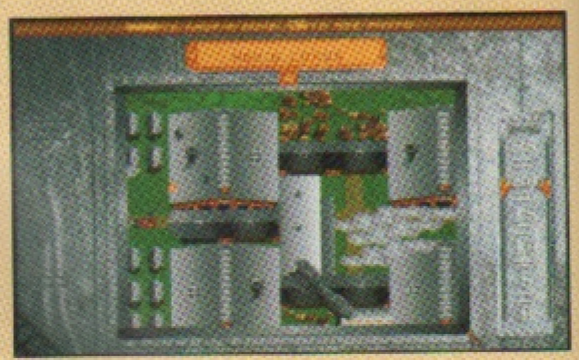

AMBER POTION – If you're likely to face a powerful runemaster take a swig of this to nullify his worst effects.


DRAGON POTION – Like the fabled beast, anyone drinking this potion will heal at great speed, become stronger than steel and suffer no ill effects from a magician's wand.


SUN RING – It's said that a good dose of sunshine soon heals your wounds and with this ring it's true.


Make sure you check the status of your bombers before they head out on a run. Accuracy is essential as they have a limited supply of bombs.


This map shows your targets as well as flack batteries. Should you take too many hits your bomber will go crashing to the ground.


Once you're airborne it's very difficult to tell what your target is, so it's best just to saturate the general area and keep your fingers crossed.

THE ANCIENT ART OF WAR IN THE SKIES

'Monkeys at seven o'clock' cried Ginger. 'Well I never, it appears to be Microprose's latest foray into aerial combat!' replied Mark Patterson, busily scraping flies from his goggles.

The Ancient Art Of War In The Skies, apart from having a ridiculously long title, gives you the chance to match wits with a number of famous generals over the battle fields of first world war Europe.

In your role as commander of several squadrons of fighters and bombers, your orders are simple – drive the enemy back at any cost. All of the strategy takes place on a map screen, where your and your enemy's bases, cities and factories are displayed. From here you order air strikes and keep tabs on what your foe is up to. Clicking on one of your bases brings up a list of the pilots and bombers stationed there. When you've chosen how many to send on a raid, or to intercept the enemy, you can sit back and watch them taking off, before waiting for an action sequence to occur.

When aircraft from opposing sides meet you're asked if you want to take control of an aircraft. Select yes and you're taken to a screen displaying all the participating craft, which then begin to whirl away taking pot-shots at each other. Alternatively, you can skip this and the computer calculates the outcome based on the individual skill of the pilots and a small slice of luck.


As the tide of the war turns the battle lines are redrawn and bases either captured or lost. You need to keep an eye on what's going on so you don't bomb your own troops.



The box in the bottom left of the screen shows the status of the nearest plane. As it takes more hits smoke starts pouring from it.

SEAT OF THE PANTS

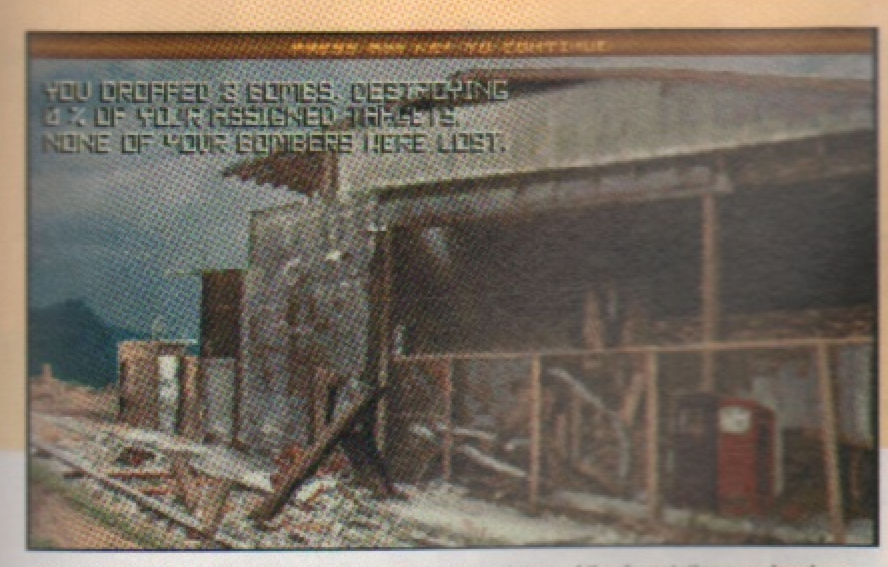
A pilot's skill is shown by the amount of medals he has, the more the better. You have to pay attention to this if you're not planning on controlling the aircraft during a dogfight, as a skilful pilot has far more chance of surviving than a rookie. Bombers are also in short supply, so if you think you could be facing plenty of enemy fighters it's worth keeping some in reserve so you're not left without the ability to strike back after attacks.

It's important to plan attacks carefully as destroying different targets affects the enemy's war effort in different ways. Destroying factories lengthens the time it takes for new aircraft to be delivered, while bombing a city hurts the supply lines. Airbases can prove worthwhile targets, but you have to contend with the fighters stationed there, and they

TZU TV

Since World War I ended only 75 years ago, you might be wondering why the word 'Ancient' is in the game's title. The inspiration for this game, and its two PC-only predecessors, lies in a 2500 year-old book. *The Art Of War* was written by Sun Tzu, a great Japanese warrior who meticulously studied his enemies' tactics, terrain and soldiers before engaging in a battle. As you can imagine he was far more successful than his opponents who simply charged in expecting a healthy ruck, and went on to stake a place in Japanese legend. The book has proved a source of inspiration for many more recent military leaders, including Napoleon and several of the brains behind the planning of Desert Storm.

His teachings were essentially simple, and were summed up in phrases such as 'by knowing what your enemy has done in the past you can predict what he will do in the future'. The manual goes into some detail applying his teachings to the subject matter of the game, although I don't think think Sun Tzu intended many of his concepts to be applied to a bunch of men with big moustaches, plenty of jolly banter and rickety flying machines.



Complete a mission successfully and you're shown a picture of the devastation your bombers helped create.

are also rebuilt at the twice the speed of other targets.

Considering Microprose's more than healthy reputation for producing flight sims, I was shocked by the unprofessional look of this one. Where their usual flight sims incorporate excellent vector graphics and mounds of realism, this looks like some kind of reject from the public domain. Controlling your small sprite-based aircraft, you have to steer it around the screen shooting at other tiny aircraft.



Little cameo pics like this appear just before an encounter.

BOMBS AWAY!!

The bombing section turned out to be a little more promising. Viewing your target area from 10,000 feet up, you simply have to avoid flak batteries and get to the target areas. When you're in the right position press the fire button and, if you're really getting into the spirit of things, shout something like 'that's one in the eye for the Hun' or 'tally-ho and back to base chaps'. As you can see, while enjoyable for the first, say, five minutes, the appeal of this section wanes extremely quickly.

The one thing that could save the game also fails. Strategy is where the bulk of the game lies and slowly drowns in a mire of limited options and poor design. Depending on the tactics the computer is employing, you have to order your bombers out to bomb targets such as factories and other airbases. What this section lacks is depth – there's hardly anything to it. Once your planes are airborne you tell them what altitude to fly at, what formation to fly in and what they should do to their target when they reach it. The lack of options is blatantly obvious. It would have been better if they'd simply given you a little airbase of your own and all the problems that come with it, such as training new pilots, getting hold of fuel, acquiring new planes and ammunition as well as the hassles that come with taking part in such a notoriously badly managed conflict.

The manual also reflects the lack of depth in the game. Very little space is devoted to telling you how to play it, while there's mountains of background information on the air war in Europe. Most pointless of all are the eight pages which just list the names of pilots who scored over 10 kills. This is designed to help you create realistic scenarios by using the names of those who participated, although it strikes me as being a stunning waste of space.

This is well below the standard that we've come to expect from Microprose over the years. We can only look forward to *F-117* and *Gunship 2000*, both of which are due out later this year. CU

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RELEASE DATE:	JUNE 1993
GENRE:	STRATEGY
TEAM:	IN HOUSE
CONTROLS:	J,K,M
NUMBER OF DISKS:	4
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	YES
MEMORY:	1Mb

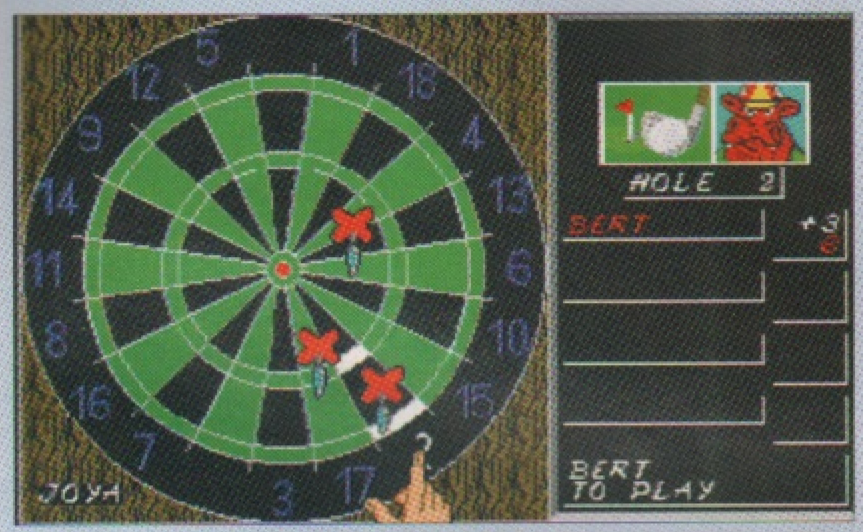
GRAPHICS	44%
SOUND	64%
LASTABILITY	56%
PLAYABILITY	43%

Severely limited strategy game. Not what we expect from Microprose.

OVERALL 45%

BULLY'S SPORTING DARTS

ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE OUT NOW £9.99



The aim of the game in golf is to hit the small, highlighted double or treble slots in a specific number of throws. Hit the treble first time and you'll score a hole in one.

Darts is a game usually played by fat northern beer drinkers in smoky working men's clubs. Not that I have anything against fat northern beer drinkers having spent a good proportion of my life amongst them. It's just that darts is a game that can only be enjoyed whilst consuming large quantities of alcohol. For that reason *Bully's Sporting Darts* was doomed to failure from the off.

For those of you unfamiliar with the delights of Sunday afternoon telly Bully is a cartoon character from the 'lovely, super, smashing, great' quiz show *Bullseye*. This game features darts quite heavily and is held together by Jim Bowen's smashing catchphrases. *Bully's Darts* may be a licence of the character from the quiz but it bears little resemblance to the show. This version sports six variations on the basic darts theme, as well as the normal 501 there's football, golf, snooker, tennis, cricket and round the board. This may seem like a lot to choose from but they're all much the same. For instance, in football you throw the darts at highlighted segments of the board in an attempt to get to your opponent's goal segment and then have a chance to score by throwing at the bull. In tennis, you throw at highlighted segments in order to keep the imaginary ball in play. Yawn!!



In football only the top half of the board is in use. The segment on the far left represents your goal area and the one on the right your opponents. Hit the highlighted segments in sequence to reach the far side then go for the bull to score a goal.

Unlike the real thing there's actually little skill involved. You control a wobbly on-screen hand which suffers badly from the effects of gravity. So, to get the darts in the bit of board you want it's basically a question of keeping the joystick pushed up and steady. Bully is ever present throughout the game to give a word of encouragement or derision... well, actually all he does is moo! In fact Bully's moo is just about the only sound effect and as for the in-game tune, the less said the better. As a budget release *Bully's Darts* fails abysmally, in fact it would have trouble cutting it as PD. Avoid.



In snooker darts, as in the real game, go for a red before nominating a colour. Build up a decent break in an attempt to stay awake.

Jon Sloan



NEXT MONTH IN



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DISK 60

WORKBENCH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



Save on modem bills! Remember birthdays! Understand those error codes! All this and more is possible with Electronic Zoo's top-rated *Workbench Management System.*

Working alongside the standard Workbench, *WMS* can be loaded in separately or installed on start-up. Its functions include an excellent data compressor which allows you to free up disk space and download compressed files from bulletin boards. If that doesn't appeal to you, there are a number of other practical gadgets including a calendar which alerts you to important events, a sophisticated notepad which borders on being a word processor, and a button editor which lets you load specified files with a single click, bypassing directories.

As if that wasn't enough it also tells you the time in decimal, hexadecimal, binary and Roman numerals. Slightly more useful is the telephone directory, which comes complete with an excellent search facility and useful modem dialler.

The best bit is it's dead simple to use. You don't need to be a Workbench wizz to get to grips with even *WMS*'s most complex features. Simply point and click on the icon of your choice and away you go. There's even an error translator which explains what those meaningless error messages are all about.

DISK 61

VIRGIN'S APOCALYPSE!



Roll over *Desert Strike*, Virgin are gunning for chart success with their awesome helicopter blast, *Apocalypse*. You can find out first hand, and exclusively in the next issue of CU, what all the hype is about.

Programmed by not one, but two development teams, over the last two years, they've combined arcade quality graphics with stunning digitised sound effects to produce a potential classic. As the pilot of a super-hard helicopter gunship, your orders are to deal with insurgency where ever it rears its head. At your disposal is a massive arsenal of heat-seeking missiles, rockets and fire bombs and more than enough targets to fire them at.

On their side, the enemy also have a formidable arsenal of guns, missile launchers, tanks and heavily armed ground troops. Often you'll be required to protect your forces on the ground which calls for pinpoint accuracy if you don't want to end up at a friendly-fire inquest. The action takes place over a series of horizontally scrolling levels, where your enemies are holed up in jungles and other such out of the way places, just waiting to unleash their weapons on unsuspecting helicopters.



As if that wasn't enough there's also a full review of the game in the next issue. Cor, are we good to you or what?

* Contents subject to change without notice.

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TAKING CONTROL

If you're new to this type of game, the following handy hints will help you become accustomed to the joystick controls.

You control the player nearest to the ball, highlighted by a line underneath his feet. All the other players on your team behave according to their individual attributes and will move into suitable positions to receive a pass.

When not in possession of the ball, the longer your player runs in one direction the faster he goes. When flat out, it's harder to change direction, and you'll need a bit of practice to find a happy medium between pace and control.

There are a number of different ways of tackling an opponent. A sliding tackle is pulled off by tapping the fire button whilst the ball is low on the ground. As a result your player will slide in the direction he is facing. To make a safe tackle your player must make contact with the ball before he makes contact with the opponent – if not, you'll almost certainly have the Ref on your back! To stop an opposing player reaching a ball, get between him and the ball so he has to slow down. It's possible to intercept passes when either running normally or whilst performing a sliding tackle. If you're going too fast, you'll probably lose control.

To head a ball, quickly tap the fire button when the ball is in the air and, when the player jumps, push your joystick in the required direction. You can make the player head the ball downwards by holding the fire button down while the player is in the air until he heads it.

A player automatically kicks the ball ahead of him as he runs in a straight line. The distance kicked depends on the speed that the player is running. To trap the ball at your feet, you must press and hold the fire button immediately before your player touches the ball. You'll come to a stop with the ball at your feet. Now, centre the joystick, release the fire button, push the joystick in a new direction, and off you go!

Passing the ball is just as simple. Trap the ball, keep the fire button held down and then move your joystick so your player is facing the direction in which he wants to pass the ball. Now, release the fire button and the ball will be passed to the feet of the player nearest to yours in the direction you are currently pushing the joystick.

You can chip the ball by reversing your joystick when in contact with the ball. Alternatively, stop running with the ball. The ball will then run on ahead and, if you've judged it correctly, it will run through to another of your players. This can be very effective as some players follow the movement of the player rather than the movement of the ball and this can fool them.

Shooting with the ball is also easy. A normal shot merely requires a quick stab on the fire button. You may then adjust the direction and height of the ball using after touch (which we'll describe in a minute). Get in close to goal and tapping the fire button will pull off a Super Shot. No aiming is necessary, just stab the fire button and the ball will go powering towards goal. The quality of the strike will depend on your player's individual shooting skill.

After touch is applied to a ball after it has been kicked. It lets you affect the height and direction of a ball. The direction of your joystick immediately after a kick determines the direction of the swerve – how soon after the kick you adjust the direction and how long you hold onto it in that direction before letting go determines the amount of swerve.

NET A LIMITED EDITION FOOTBALL SHIRT

COURTESY OF VIRGIN AND ADIDAS

CU AMIGA have teamed up with *Goal!*'s publishers, Virgin, and top sportswear firm, Adidas, to offer 12 lucky (or not so lucky) readers the chance to win an original Arsenal away team shirt in our extra special coverdisk competition.

So how can you win one of these elegant fashion accessories? Simple! Check out our *Goal!* coverdisk and you'll notice that the demo is made up of six levels that get progressively harder as the game goes on. Each level is one minute in length and to progress to the next level you must score a goal in the allotted time. If you don't score, you'll be taken to the front screen were you'll be able to view your pitiful score.

If you score a goal in all six levels (i.e. you score six goals for the numerically challenged amongst you!), you will also be given a score. If you think you've got a particularly good one, and reckon it's probably better than anybody else could achieve, then press the F1 key and your score plus an ID code will be displayed. Write both the score and the code down and send them into CU AMIGA on the entry form provided. (And just in case you thought of cheating, Dino's designed the demo so that the code will authenticate your score! Ha!).

The points system works thus: Scoring a goal will give you 100 points and the quicker you score, the more bonus points you can amass. So, if you score a goal with 55 seconds left on the clock, you'll get 155 points for that round. If, however, you score with just one second remaining, you'll only collect 101 points. Your score is automatically carried over to each new level, until you either fail to score or complete the demo.

You should be aiming to amass at least 800 points in total to be in with a chance of winning. The overall winner will also receive a special commemorative plack to stick on the mantlepiece and show off to their friends. Blimey!

RULES ARE RULES

1. This competition is not open to employees of EMAP Images/Virgin/Adidas.
2. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
3. Results will be published in a future issue of CU AMIGA.
4. Closing date for entries is June 15th, 1993.



One of these fantastic limited edition football shirts could be yours in our easy-to-enter competition.

ENTRY FORM

Cut out this coupon and send it to: Goooaaaaalllllll!!!!! Compo, CU Amiga, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, Farringdon, London, EC1R 3AU.

Yep, I'm a top Amiga gamesplayer and I've managed to complete the Goal! coverdisk demo and amassed a total score of .... points! My special code number was............

Name:..

Address:...

....

....

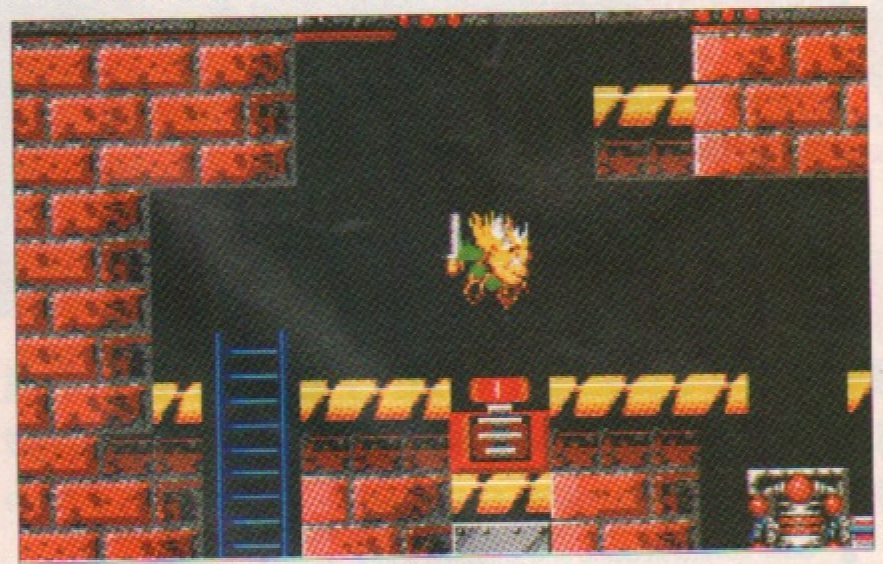
Tick box if you'd like to know more about Virgin game titles ❑

THE LOST

Science fiction meets Nordic nasties in Interplay's latest platform-cum-puzzle game. John Mather pulls out his hair in frustration (or what's left of it..)



Just like real life brothers, our three Vikings like nothing better than a bit of an argument with each other.



Lots of devices are on hand to help you get around a level – these include giant bubbles, lifts, ladders, transporters, bicycle pumps(!), and drawbridges.





It's a good job there are infinite continues in this game as your Viking friends are far from invincible.

Take three overweight Vikings, a bunch of intergalactic zoologists and some of the most dastardly tricks and traps ever to appear in a computer game, and you'll get some idea of what awaits you in this zany platform romp. Best described as *Lemmings* meets *Rick Dangerous, The Lost Vikings* is set on-board an alien spaceship which doubles up as an intergalactic zoo. Our heroes, three Viking brothers, have been spirited away from their ancestral homeland and dumped in the cargo hold of this travelling menagerie. Destined to spend the rest of their days in slavery, the tubby trio of warriors set out to conquer their alien zookeeper, the infamous Tomator, and return to their loved ones.

To gain their freedom they have to hack and slash their way through more than 37 levels of platform tomfoolery and hair-pulling puzzles. Although fairly easy to begin with, i.e. get key to open door or push switch to deactivate forcefield, the puzzles get more and more complicated as the game progresses. Soon, you'll be encountering epic multi-screen extravaganzas that encompass some of the strangest (not to say wackiest) puzzles ever. For instance, one level requires your Nordic heroes to fill themselves full of hot air from a bicycle pump in order to float up to safety. Another episode involves an encounter with a bunch of Egyptian Mummies, whose very touch turns you into a bandaged zombie.

DIFFERENT WORLDS

To stop things getting dull, the action is set across a number of worlds, accessed at the end of each stage by guiding your three warriors through a time portal. Thus, although the action starts off on board the alien space ship, you'll soon find yourself stomping across a primeval swamp, encountering Egyptian Mummies and being fired upon by futuristic robots. All these new opponents are some of the other exhibits put together by Tomator, and they're all as mad as hell, so watch out.

Each of the three Vikings has their own special abilities. For instance, Erik the Swift is the fastest of the trio and also has the ability to head-butt his way through a variety of solid objects. Baleog the Beserker, on the other hand, is the weapons expert and possesses both a sword and bow and arrow with which to take out any of the encroaching nasties. The last member of the group, Olaf the Stout, carries a hefty shield which is useful for protecting the other members of the team when they come under fire. His shield can also be turned into a makeshift parachute when held over his head, useful for gliding down otherwise inaccessible tunnels.

As you've probably gathered, each level is solved by team work and exploiting each Viking's unique abilities to their best advantage. A level is only completed once all three warriors have been guided to the exit point – and it's only by working as a team that you'll be able to get there. For instance, a charging dinosaur can be held at bay by Olaf, but it requires Baleog to finish the beast off with a well placed blow from his sword. Likewise, Erik might be able to reach some of the more inaccessible areas of the game by leaping across chasms and darting up platforms, but he really is useless when it comes to defending himself, and so must rely on the other team members

VIKINGS

MEET THE GANG 'COS THE BOYS ARE HERE...

They've given us Noggin the Nog, Magnus Magnusson and possibly the worst lager in the world. And now we get this lot...



ERIK THE SWIFT

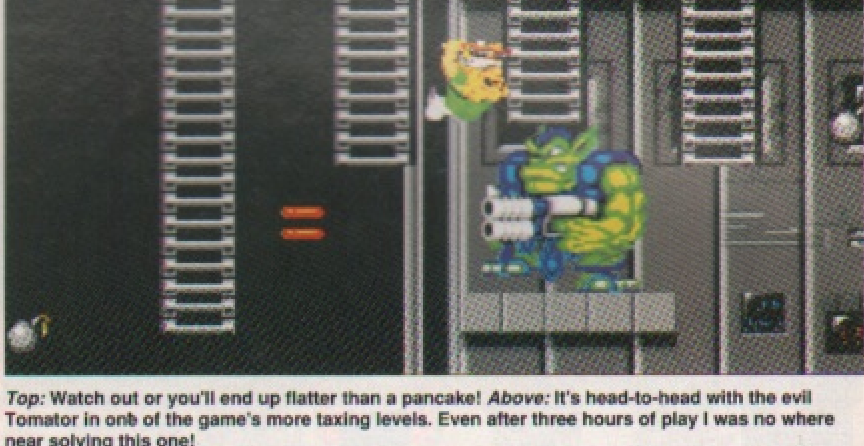
Erik is the swiftest and most agile of the three Vikings which makes him utterly indispensable. He can outrun any enemy and leap high into the air, reaching previously inaccessible areas. He also has a head of stone which he can use to bash open walls and retrieve hidden goodies. Unfortunately, he is also virtually defenceless and is wide open to attack.

BALEOG THE BESERKER

This guy's main weapon is his sword, although he also possesses a bow and arrow which proves ideal for activating switches that are a long distance away. He's the grumpy one of the bunch and will often start off the squabbling that accompanies the end of each level.

OLAF THE STOUT

Olaf's appetite for adventure is rivalled only by his passion for pastries. When not nibbling on some tasty fruit, he can be found sheltering behind an enormous shield. This is handy for stopping an enemy in its path or for deflecting enemy fire. The same shield can be used as a parachute or hang-glider so that he can float long distances without coming to harm. Despite this protective shield, it's not always effective, especially against foes who have jumping capabilities.



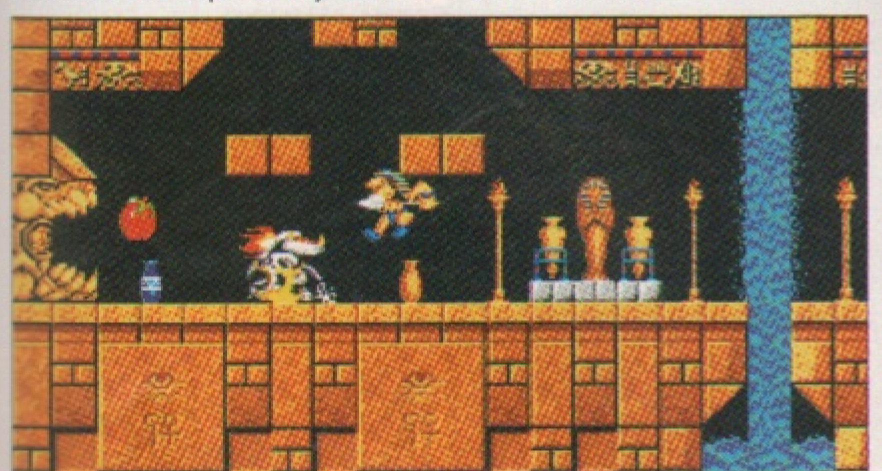
Top: Watch out or you'll end up flatter than a pancake! *Above:* It's head-to-head with the evil Tomator in one of the game's more taxing levels. Even after three hours of play I was no where near solving this one!

to help him out.

There are a number of objects scattered about each level to make life that little bit easier. Food comes in especially useful, as each character only comes equipped with three hit points, so a tasty piece of stake or a juicy apple can replenish your health (and is consumed by a brilliant burping sound). There are also various keys, smart bombs and weapons to collect along the way, all vital to your speedy progress. These are collected by simply walking across the object which is then stored in an inventory for later use. There are also many hidden objects, so it's best to thoroughly explore each level, just in case you missed something.

CHOICES

You can choose to play the game from the keyboard or by using a combination of keyboard and joystick. The latter method isn't particularly recommended, especially when you have to press a key while also using the joystick at the same time. I eventually switched to keyboard only and found this a much better option. The SNES version of the game wins handsown in this department, as everything can be controlled via the joypad!



The best thing about the game are the oodles and oodles of animation. It's almost like watching a cartoon at times!

It's likely that comparisons will be made to *Lemmings*, but *The Lost Vikings* only bears superficial similarities. One of the things the programmers could have learnt from Psygnosis' puzzler, though, is the special preview mode where you can scroll around a level to see what's coming up and plan your actions in advance. I found it constantly annoying to have to take a leap into darkness, not knowing what was coming next, and invariably meeting a grisly fate. Once one team member bites the dust, it's back to the start of a level, although first you've got to endure an end sequence of a blazing longboat drifting out to sea – all very nice, but incredibly time consuming and it really disrupts the gameplay. Thankfully, the game hasn't a time limit, and there are infinite continues and a password system, so it's a more leisurely stroll than most arcade puzzlers, and the difficulty curve is just right. It's just a shame that each level takes so long to load!



Walk like an Egyptian – well, you will do if that Mummy catches up with you. One touch and you'll be transformed into one of the walking dead and that'll be the end of this particular level.

A LAUGH A MINUTE

One of the game's most attractive features is the huge amount of incidental humour that's been packed in. Some of the animations used to depict our three barbarians are a hoot, especially the many and varied death scenes. Get electrocuted by a forcefield, and your body turns into a pile of old bones, while tumbling into quicksand means a slow slide to oblivion as you wave a fond farewell. The humour isn't confined to the graphics and animation, though – at the end of each level the three Vikings always have a pop at each other. Gradually, a story unfolds, and some of the gags are genuinely funny.

The Lost Vikings isn't a perfect game by any means, but it is a lot of fun. Some of the later levels are particularly testing and incredibly devious, obviously the work of some sadistic games designer, and will certainly take some time to complete. Dangerously addictive. CU

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RELEASE DATE:	OUT NOW
GENRE:	ARCADE PUZZLER
TEAM:	SILICON AND SYNAPSE
CONTROLS:	J OR K
NUMBER OF DISKS:	2
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	NO
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	82%
SOUND	80%
LASTABILITY	87%
PLAYABILITY	79%

"Pillaging and plundering has never been so much fun."

OVERALL 82%

NIPPON SAFES INC.



Dino exercises his history muscle as he takes a look through the museum.

The Land of the Rising Sun gets a visit from our very own multiple personality, Tony Dillon.

As so many Japanese games filter their way into the European market via the console sector, it's interesting to find a game that provides a Westerner's view of the Orient, complete with overcrowded tube trains and more gadgets and squalor in a square mile than you'd find in one London borough! Of course, this isn't truly representative of our views, but playing up to stereotypes is always good for a laugh.

MAKING IT UP

The game is set in the fictional city of Tyoko, and centres around three ex-convicts recently released from prison. The first, Donna Fatale, is a saucy nightclub dancer who is repeatedly arrested due to one of her more risqué dances. Doug Nuts is a scientific genius with no looks and no personality – he's arrested for blowing open a vault only to find it full of police. Finally, there's Dino Fagioli, a mountain of a man with all the strength and brains of your average JCB digger. Gullible in the extreme, his only crime was to help a man open a car door – which didn't belong to him! When the police arrived at the scene, the man was nowhere to be seen and poor Dino was left holding the baby!

The luscious Donna Fatale in action. Who said there's sexism in computer games?

You can choose to play any of these characters, or all three if you so desire. Each has a part to play in the overall story, but that doesn't mean you need to control them all. If you like, you can just play one of the characters, meeting the others at the appropriate moments, but that takes all the ingenuity out of it.

The most interesting thing about this system, called Parallaction, is that all three stories follow different paths, crossing rarely but always relevant to each other. Dino, for example, starts his freedom with a job in the Museum, whereas Donna will go back to the club where she was arrested and look for her old friends. Before too long, though, all three get caught up in the same plot and the game proper begins.

SIMPLICITY ITSELF

Looking at the screenshots, you've probably guessed that this is a graphic adventure, although a lot simpler than most. There are no icons to clutter up the screen, and no information panels permanently displayed. All commands are issued by the mouse, either by clicking on an area of the screen to make a character walk over to it, or by clicking the right mouse button to bring up the control panel.

The first time I saw the control panel, I had a few doubts. There are only four control icons – open/close, examine, take and talk. Alongside them are any items you might be carrying, but that's it. Obviously you'll think something along the lines of 'Oh, there aren't many actions you can do, the game must be really easy'. Not at all. The nice thing about this game is the large sequence of actions required to solve a puzzle, rather than one particular action from a list of dozens.

You'll note that there are only two real object manipulation icons – open and take. That's because the rest of the game is fairly intelligent. If you highlight a goldfish and then drag it over a fishtank, it knows that you aren't trying to unlock the fishtank. In the same way, the game won't let you perform actions that have nothing to do with the game. It might be funny to feed the goldfish to a cat, but try it and the game won't register anything. Why waste time?

BIONIC BABIES

This game paints a very strange picture of Japan, based purely on age-old stereotypes, but who's to say that the real thing isn't far stranger? For example, leading Japanese computer magazine *Log-In* – the managing director of which is a man called Zool – carries all sorts of informative features such as how to make your Apple Macintosh look like cartoon cat Garfield! Weirdest of all are the results of a recent survey carried out among Japanese schoolchildren, which showed that almost a third would like to lose their limbs and have them replaced with bionic equivalents! Still, as imported technology gets cheaper by the day, we can be sure it won't cost six million dollars!

Doug Nuts flatly refuses to blow up the safe when he's standing right in front of it.

Donna tries to drop in to see the Emperor, with designs on getting his sword.





PUZZLING

The backbone of any adventure game, though, is the puzzle element. If the puzzles are too easy, it spoils the game. If they are too illogical, the game becomes frustrating. With so few manipulation icons, the bulk of the puzzles in *Nippon Safes* are based around picking objects up and using them in different locations. Once an object is collected, you can't put it down until it's served its logical function, so it's best to collect everything you can.

As each character works through their story, they will occasionally bump into the other two. This lets you connect the three games together. For instance, at one stage Donna has to learn to make tea. She goes to a tea shop to ask for instructions, and while outside notices a poster offering a huge cash prize in a wrestling tournament. She bumps into Dino and persuades him to go in for it. If you play as Dino, you are walking through the market square when you bump into Donna and she convinces you to enter the tournament. The fun part of playing all three is seeing each scene from the various viewpoints.

The game is very funny, right from the start. Most of the humour comes from the conversations the characters have with other people and themselves. Dino's naive insights into life, the universe and everything are amazing, and the smart Alec answers you'll receive from Doug Nuts every time you try something stupid have to be seen!

Nippon Safes isn't the most original graphic adventure, nor is it the most challenging. It is a playable and entertaining game however, and if you're looking for something to while away a week or two, you could certainly do a lot worse.

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RELEASE DATE:	MAY
GENRE:	GRAPHIC ADVENTURE
TEAM:	DYNABYTE
CONTROLS:	MOUSE
NUMBER OF DISKS:	5
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	YES
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	91%
SOUND	82%
LASTABILITY	84%
PLAYABILITY	83%

A playable, if not all that taxing graphic adventure. Fun to play.

OVERALL 86%

GRAHAM GOOCH'S WORLD CLASS CRICKET

Protecting his bails as he goes, Mark Patterson grabs his pads and heads for the crease.



Considering the English invented cricket, it's a little disturbing that we now find ourselves in the position of possessing one of the worst test teams on the planet. Now's your chance to avenge their numerous defeats, not by shooting the MCC, but by battering the world's teams into submission with your joystick skills.

Graham Gooch's World Class Cricket lets you battle some of the most formidable sides in test cricket. Matches can be played over a number of innings, although I found any more than one fifty-overs-a-side innings to be utterly brain-numbing.

The world's top teams such as Pakistan and Australia are included, along with the actual player names. There's also a World XI which is made up from the best players from each team.

That apart, all the usual teams present a more than adequate challenge. Each team is made up from a squad of 20 and it's up to you to choose your final 11. The players all have individual ratings for bowling and batting, so it's best to go by these when selecting the final squad rather than opting for your favourites.

The batters have a wide variety of strokes in their arsenal. Depending on the kind of delivery, you can get them to execute sweeps, on-drives, off-drives, hooks and plenty more. If you choose a stroke which is impossible to play on the current ball, the chances are your batter will just stand there looking bashful.

Bowling is a matter of being able to waggle the joystick extremely fast. This is used to determine the speed of fast bowlers or spin of swing balls.

Fortunately your arm gets a decent rest between overs, so you can put the Ralgex away.

Your fielders are computer controlled, which is a little frustrating as they adhere utterly to procedure and never take risks.

For instance, no matter how close they are to bowler's-end stumps, they'll always throw to the wicket keeper, which means its possible to exploit this and grab a couple of easy runs.

The batting and bowling orders are initially decided by the computer, which automatically selects the best players in your side and places them first. It pays to keep an eye on its selection as it doesn't take tactics into account and will readily give you four fast bowlers followed by all your spin bowlers.

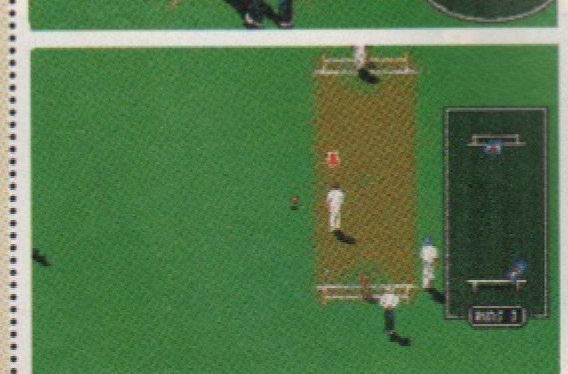
Without a doubt the game's most outstanding feature is its graphics. The animation is superb and the players are a decent size. The sound effects are sparse, but add to the atmosphere.

At the end of the day there are just some things this game can't simulate, such as the fear generated by a lump of leather-wrapped wood hurtling towards your head at 100mph.

If you can handle that, and are prepared to give up the customary visit to the ale house at the end of a match, you should find plenty of fun here.

Below: As the Aussie bowler approaches Gooch he takes full advantage of the poor speed to swing...
Bottom: ...aiming a full on drive to mid-off.





OVER AND OUT

Cricket is a game that seems to be severely misunderstood. Little do most people realise that the batsman isn't so much trying to hit the ball, as defend himself. A blistering ball right down the line leaves the kind of mark you'll be boasting about for a long time. This kind of life-or-bruises attitude can't be simulated on a computer, and is a point which lets this game down. An injuries feature would have been excellent. After all, who can forget Mike Gatting returning from a test a few years ago with a broken nose and two black eyes?

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RELEASE DATE:	OUT NOW
GENRE:	SPORTS
TEAM:	IN HOUSE
CONTROLS:	JOYSTICK
NUMBER OF DISKS:	1
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1/2
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	NO
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	80%
SOUND	70%
LASTABILITY	70%
PLAYABILITY	70%

Adequate but not overly exciting sports sim.

OVERALL 75%

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY CHALLENGE





Above: The accuracy of your place kick depends on how well you negotiate the wind.

Left: View the action in video mode.

DOMARK £24.99

After losing the rights to screen FA Premier League matches on 'normal' TV, the major channels have turned to rugby as a way of catching the post-Sunday dinner audiences.

As a result of that and some excellent showings from the England team, the sport's popularity has undergone a meteoric rise to the point where Joe Public is actually interested in friendly matches as well as the major tournaments.

Cashing in on the sport's popularity, Domark have taken their original 1991 rugby game, made a few minor adjustments here and there (and I mean minor) and churned it out in time to catch the Sevens World Cup.

What's beyond me is why they didn't produce a sevens game. Rugby Challenge is so similar to the first rugby game that there's no point in buying it if you own its predecessor. Basing it on rugby sevens would have made sense as it's a far faster game which requires completely different tactics to its 15-aside cousin.

For those unfamiliar with this game, it covers just about every feature of the sport from line-outs to place kicks. The player graphics are small, which makes the action confusing at times, but on the whole the gameplay is fluid and fast. The action changes for kicks, with you viewing the goal from behind the kicker. To get the ball through the uprights you need to stop a steadily increasing power bar at the right place by pressing fire.

To keep you occupied you can take your team to the world cup, five nations tournament or on a tour against teams of your choice. There's also a replay feature which lets you watch the best moments of a match over and over again until you're utterly sick of them.

If you're a die-hard rugby who hasn't bought the original, you won't go far wrong here. Even if you're not a fan of the sport, the *Kick Off* style game play makes for an excellent diversion from the usual footy games.

Mark Patterson **65%**



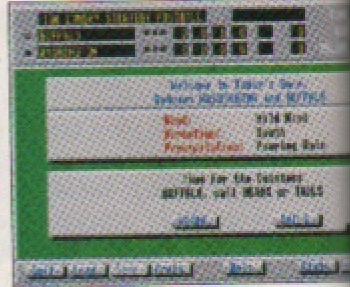
Fortunately your players don't suffer injuries.



Huddle down for the scrum and get your forwards into the action.



TOM LANDRY STRATEGIC FOOTBALL



The weather can have a marked impact on the way the game goes.

MERIT SOFTWARE £44.99

Just by reading the title of this game you know you're running into trouble. Tom Landry? Never heard of him. Strategic? That means no action, right? Football? Yes, the American kind.

Avoiding the popular action format, Merit have opted to take us behind the scenes for a head coach's eye view of the game. Your contribution to the team takes place on the tactics screen. Here you assign what defence or attack they are to execute. When this is done you simply sit back and watch the players battle it out. What's frustrating about this part is that the graphics are actually very good, and if you were given the opportunity to control the players this would be a rather excellent game.

So what do you do when the computer informs you that the offence are lining up for a shotgun? In my case I selected the likeliest looking formation and hoped for the best. It worked. I won my first match against New England 59-3. The manual touches on the various plays suggesting which ones are appropriate for certain situations, but even then it's impossible to 'read' the opposition to work out what they're planning.

Watch the kick-off from the stands.

With each quarter lasting 15 minutes, not including the time it takes to select a play, boredom soon smacks you square between the eyes. There aren't that many plays, and by the time you finish a game your synapses have evolved to a sufficient level to actually understand them.

After that much play, I'd seen enough to convince me that I really didn't want to play again. It's exceedingly repetitive – which probably has more to do with the limited nature of the game than the subject matter. I doubt that even genuine American fans of the game would find much lasting interest here.

If Merit were aiming for a management game they missed the mark by not including transfers, draft picks, training, financial difficulties and the heart problems which dog most NFL head coaches.

This is the kind of game whose ancestors were text-only titles back on the ZX81. Unfortunately, the addition of some nice graphics and a decent user-interface doesn't cover-up the primitive gameplay and a total lack of action. You're much better off sticking with the mix of action and strategy offered in EA's excellent .

Mark Patterson



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WOODY'S WORLD

Their Public Domain games are some of the best around, but are Vision Software capable of producing the same standard of commercial software? Tony Dillon investigates.



Woody crouches down in fear of his life. That steam jet could fire at any moment!

A couple of months ago CU AMIGA proved that shareware doesn't have to be poorware when we included a rather smashing little shoot 'em up on our coverdisk by the name of *Cybernetix*. Designed and coded by New Zealand-based team Vision Software, it served to show just how good they really were. *Woody's World* is their first full-price release, and I'm happy to say that it maintains the same levels of playability and professionalism. Could we have another contender for the Team 17-PD-Team-Turned-Professional crown?

Woody is an elf, and a worried one at that. The King has summoned him to give him the bad news of the day. The world is about to end. The magic crystal that holds time and space together has been stolen. Glancing over a map of the world, the King informs Woody that although only six castles were marked on the map, there were actually seven, the location of the last being a secret. Woody, convinced that he would find the crystal there, decides to do the decent thing and head off in search of the crystal. And that is the basis for a fairly excellent platform romp.

STEAMING AHEAD

You begin the game in the King's Steam Castle – three easy-ish levels that let you learn the way the game works. Dotted around each level are any number of chests, and you have to collect at least half of them (more on later levels) before the exit will open and let you out. To begin with, these chests are all in highly conspicuous locations, such as on the ground one screen from where you start, but as you move through the game, you'll need to explore the huge levels more and more.

The levels are generally made up of mazes spread in all directions, with dozens of hidden bonuses placed in the unlikeliest of locations.

As the action takes place against the clock, just getting through the level collecting the bare minimum can be a challenge, let alone seeking things like extra lives and Woody power-ups. But it's all part of the fun.

EVEN ODDS

A platform game wouldn't be a platform game if there weren't millions of traps and other nasties waiting to wipe you out, and *Woody's World* is a platform game in every sense. Of course there are lots of things that walk, run, jump and fall all over the place – my particular hate is the small mushroom with legs on the stepping stones levels that can tell when you're trying to jump on it, and runs out of the way before you can squash it. On top of that, you've

MAPPING IT OUT

This is the map of the game world. The question marks show the locations open to you but yet to be completed, the stars show the ones you have done. Every time you complete a level, the levels immediately surrounding it are displayed. This way, there are dozens of paths to follow, and the game needn't be played in any particular order. All you need to do is get to all the castles and find that gem!



All sorts of hidden bonuses await you in the secret rooms. Simply enter and pick them up!!

THE THREE WOODYS

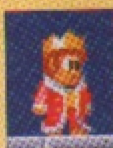
Woody is actually three elves in one – the other sides of his schizophrenic self released when he knocks the appropriate goodies from the blocks they're hidden in. The three Woodys and their respective abilities are as follows:



WOODY
This is your basic, run of the mill elf. He can run quite fast, has a sturdy pair of boots and can throw stars a short distance – further if he's moving when throwing. Bog standard really.



PRINCE WOODY
His first step up the ladder to success. Prince Woody is invoked when a Sceptre is collected and not only can he run faster and throw stars further than the factory model, he's also a master of self defence, able to pull off a lethal sliding kick when necessary.



KING WOODY
The true King Of The Castle. Picking up a crown gives Woody the fastest feet of all, as well as giving him super-human strength when it comes to throwing stars. Best of all, though, King Woody can enter Throne rooms – sort of royal secret rooms, only with more coins and even bigger surprises!

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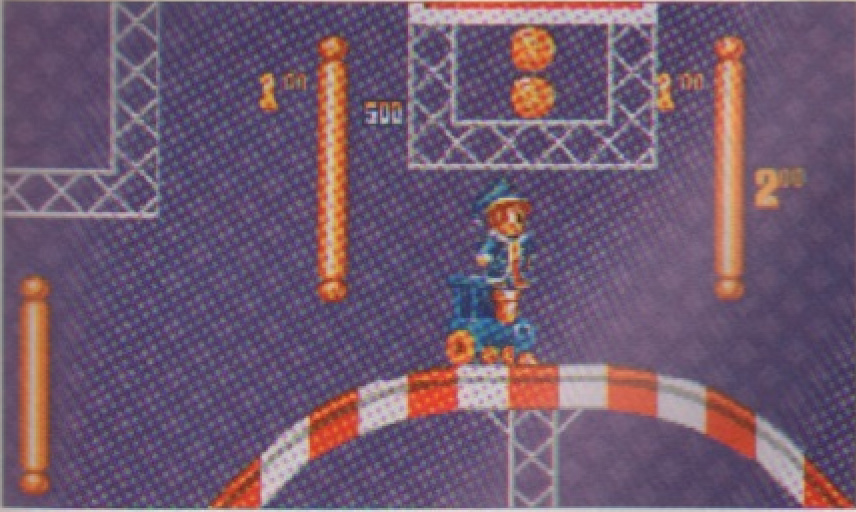
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At the end of each castle, you get to ride this train in the bonus game. No enemies, just hundreds of coins and bonus points!

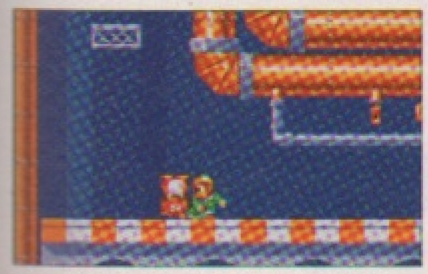
got location-specific hazards. In the Steam Castle, great jets skin-blistering steam at regular intervals which boil you to death. In the Lava Castle, gargoyles dribble fire. Islands are connected by stepping stone areas, which are wet and so, slippery to walk on. For every three steps you take, you'll slide another one – many a life has been lost by slipping over the edge of a short platform!

That's the opposition. Thankfully the home team are rooting for you, and have left all manner of goodies around. The most basic, and the most useful, is the magic star. When found, this gives you the ability to lob throwing stars at the enemy – a lot easier sometimes than trying to jump on them. Sadly this ability only lasts for the current life – lose it and you lose the star. The other real helping hand is the large amount of extra lives hidden in blocks all over each level. At first glance, they might look a little generous, but believe me when I say you'll need every one!

CAN YOU KEEP IT?

Bonus points are awarded for the number of coins collected in the level, and the bulk of these are to be found in the many secret rooms. Well, I call them secret rooms, but they aren't all that secret. A large door with a question mark on it isn't the easiest thing to hide! In these rooms are tons of coins and a special bonus, such as an extra life or a power up, even one of the chests you're searching for!

If you've seen either of Vision's big PD games, you'll know how much attention goes towards the presentation. *Woody's World* is one of the most original looking platform games I've seen for a while simply because it doesn't try to look like a console



Prince Woody tries a particularly effective sliding kick against the strange lizard man.



The stepping stones provide their own challenge in the form of a slippery floor.

game and doesn't try to look cute. The sprites and backdrops have a certain cartoon feel, but that's as cute as they get.

Playing *Woody's World* isn't like playing most platform games around at the moment. For a start, it isn't as fast as *Zool* or *Superfrog*, nor is it as complex as *Flashback*

This game doesn't aim to astound you, nor push back the barriers of Amiga games. All it does is promise to give you enough challenge to keep you playing, and enough fun to give you a good time while you are playing. Both of these promises it fulfils admirably.

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RELEASE DATE:	MAY
GENRE:	PLATFORM
TEAM:	VISION
CONTROLS:	JOYSTICK
NUMBER OF DISKS:	3
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	NO
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	82%
SOUND	80%
LASTABILITY	86%
PLAYABILITY	89%

Derivative yet fresh. A superb platform-based adventure.

OVERALL 86%

COHORT 2

IMPRESSIONS OUT NOW £29.99

IN THE BIN

The Roman Empire spawned a fair amount of nutters and geniuses in its time, all of whom would be shocked by this interpretation of how their legions fought. This strategic recreation of Roman military combat thoroughly grinds several centuries of their research, training and refining firmly into the dirt.

There are 16 preset scenarios which pit differing numbers of troops against each other over various types of terrain. These are designed to force you to vary your tactics, but in reality you just end up sending in your different units at different times.



If you own a copy of Impressions' previous Roman strategy, *Caesar* (which was a damn sight better than this), it's possible to link the two games. Now instead of relying on the computer to decide the outcome of battles, you can actually control the troops yourself.

When a group meets some opposition they all tend to come to a stop, even if only one unit is actually fighting. This means that you have to issue a separate set of orders to each unit which is not only time consuming, but very boring. The combat itself seems extremely unrealistic. For instance, a heavily armoured cavalry group can take ages to dispose of a few units of poorly equipped infantry.

I appreciate the programmers trying to make this game simple to get into, but they've omitted so many possible features that there's just not much of a game in there.

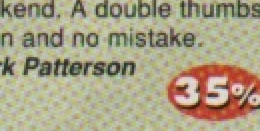
It's merely a case of telling your men to go to point A and kill everything they find. Which they'll obligingly do. It doesn't take long for the game to become utterly tedious and if it does have any good points I failed to find them.

When a battle does occur you get to see it in glorious sad-sprite-o-vision. The little soldiers gallantly try to overcome the handicap of having a minimal number of animation frames while their equally disadvantaged foes try to break through their lines.

This is an extremely shoddy package which looks as though it was chucked together on a wet weekend. A double thumbs down and no mistake.

Mark Patterson





35%



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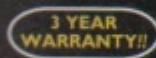
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CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 93

Move over, Brian Clough – Mark Patterson puts on his manager's cap and gives it one hundred per cent.

I normally despise football management games, mainly because they offer very little that the original *Football Manager* didn't – and that's around 10 years old now. The newly revamped *Championship Manager*, however, somehow convinced me to keep playing, no matter how much I tried to hate it.

Click on a player and you get a breakdown of their abilities along with contract information and whether they're happy at the club.

Firstly it's current. All the Premier League teams are featured along with the top European clubs. Each team has the same players as the real-life squads, with statistics reflecting their current form. This is important to football freaks like me who can't stand managing teams with players who were eligible for the '66 World Cup squad.

When you take the seat at your new desk your first job is to organise the players. As with most games of this type they're given ratings for attributes such as passing, shooting, tackling and speed. They also have contracts, disputes with the manager or other players and generally unpredictable traits. At this point you can afford to flog the trouble makers and invest your cash in some rising stars

RESERVISTS

Another feature which I haven't seen before is the inclusion of reserve teams. Where the first team players have ratings for their skills, clicking on a reserve player just gives you a comment such as 'promising' or 'fair'. Using one of these is risky, but if you're hit with an injury crisis it's usually the only place to turn.

The transfer market is the best place to pick up new talent. Amateur managers might just scout the market and see if there's anything they like, while the pros employ scouts. This motley crew have proficiency ratings depending on how successful they are. All you need to do is tell them what position you want the player to fill, how skilful they should be, which divisions to look in and what age range to look at. They'll obligingly go away and a week later report back with a list of every player who fits the bill, whether they're transfer listed or unhappy at their current club.

The team's tactics have to be set before a match if you don't want your players to end up milling around like lost sheep. This feature goes into some depth, as you have to assign each player to the position they're best suited to, choose the formation, style of play and whether or not your team hold back or push forward. The game styles range from continental to long-ball and there's just about

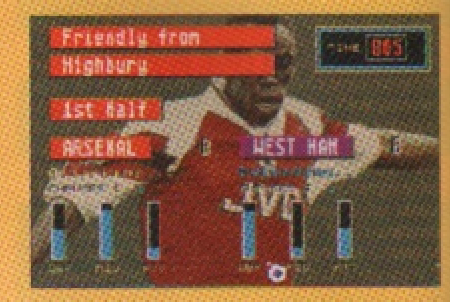


Before the season starts in earnest you can set up a couple of friendly matches. Here West Ham are cannon fodder for the Gunners.

every formation you could ask for.

Setting the tactics is extremely time consuming to begin with and initially left me wondering if I could be bothered continuing with a full season. Fortunately the game stores your last set of tactics, so once you've found a winning game plan you rarely need to alter it.

As you can tell from the screenshots on this page, there's not much to look at in this game. There are a number of preset digitised back-



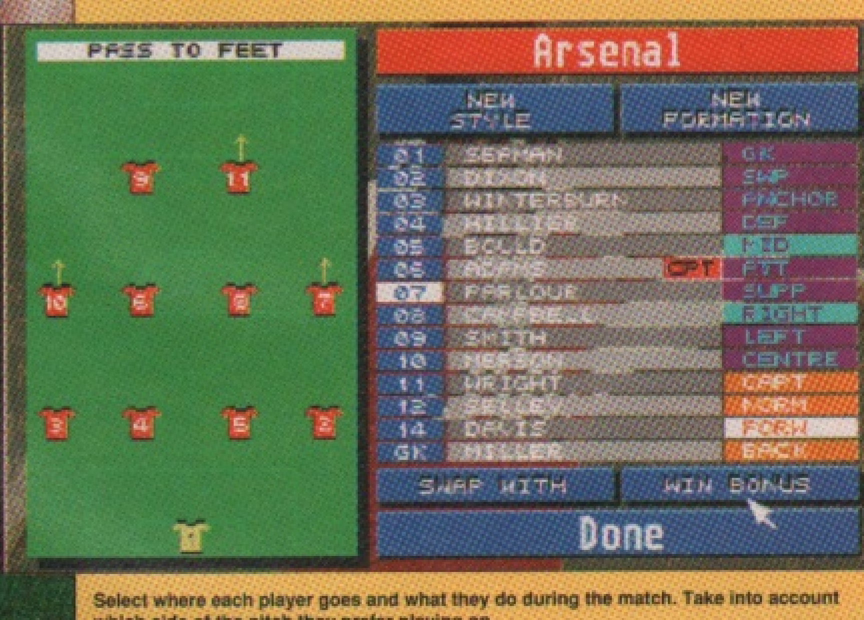
As the match progresses the bars in the bottom half of the screen increase and decrease to show who's having the best of the play.

ground pics, including one of Ian Wright (and a good thing too). Apart from those you are faced with multitudes of menus and other unattractive text screens.

What really sets this game apart is the sheer weight of features. It does take a while to process the results, and it has some very annoying features such as showing you the entire league's transfers for that week. Apart from that there's very little to fault it. CU



Check on your team's progress and see how each player is performing.



Select where each player goes and what they do during the match. Take into account which side of the pitch they prefer playing on.

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NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1-4
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MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	55%
SOUND	50%
LASTABILITY	86%
PLAYABILITY	83%

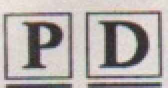
An unattractive but extremely absorbing football strategy game.

OVERALL 84%


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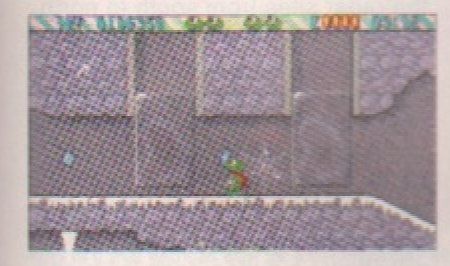
SMALL TiPS

Is that little knot of tension eating you up from the inside? Do your fingers ache after too many firebutton stabs? Well, sit back, relax and let CU Amiga take the strain. Here's another bunch of top tips guaranteed to give you relief.

SUPERFROG

We published the main level codes for Team 17's ace runaround along with our review last month. But we deliberately left out the codes for the final few levels just to keep you in suspense. Well one month is enough suspense for anyone so here's the final lot of world beating codes.

World 5 (last section):		093152
Project F:		837122
World 6:	**Section A:**	387211
	Section B:	981122
	Section C:	017632
	Section D:	398112



LEGENDS OF VALOUR

To acquire loads of cash don't go in for a simple mugging – try out the following technique instead. Find some treasure and pick it up then find a likely victim. Rather than normal mugging simply throw the treasure at them. After only one direct hit the poor unfortunate will be so dazed that he/she will drop a bag of money. Oh, and the most cash rich victims are women – that's a bit dodgy, isn't it?

LEMMINGS 2

To access a cheat that allows you to play any level from any tribe follow this. First, turn off the music. Then go back to the menu screen and left-click in every corner of the screen, starting in the top right. If it's done right you'll hear a Lem saying 'Let's go.' That's quite fiddly so as an alternative try placing the pointer in the bottom right corner of the menu screen and click once with the left then once with the right button. If you hear the same message it's worked.



CREATURES

Thalamus' platform/puzzler caused quite a stir on the C64 due to its torture chamber scenes. It's also quite a tough game to beat. So, if you're feeling a little stuck try out this cheat.

To access the cheat mode first pause the game. Now type in 'A FINE KETTLE OF FISH' including the spaces. The function keys will then allow you to access the different levels:

Cheat mode off – C
Skip to next level – F10
Stage 1.1 – F1
Stage 1.2 – F2
Torture 1 – F3
Stage 2.1 – F4
Stage 2.2 – F5
Torture 2 – F6
Stage 3.1 – F7
Stage 3.2 – F8
Torture 3 – F9

If you can't reach the end now – tough.

CLASSIC CHEATS CHEST

We've delved deeply into the vaults to bring you some classic cheats to games that stand the test of time. Occasionally our mailbag overflows with letters from pitiful games players who just can't seem to get to grips with the gameplay in classic blasts. Even more occasionally we'll take pity on them and search around for a suitable tip. Here's a few that have been plaguing you.

THE IMMORTAL

Just a few level codes to help that wizard zap his way through the dungeon:

Level 2: 757fc10006f70
Level 3: 6e1ec21000e10
Level 4: 465fa31001eb0
Level 5: d4bfd41000eb0
Level 6: bcfef51010a41
Level 7: 6b10f61010ac1
Level 8: e590d710178c1

PITFIGHTER

For an easy level skip type in LOBSTERS while you're fighting and then press 1, 2, or 3 to leap to the respective level.



POPULOUS

To make things a little easier start a Conquest Game as usual. Next go to the Game Setup screen, from there select Custom Game and go to Game Options to change any features you want. When done click on Evil, then Two Players and finally Cancel. If you followed these instructions accurately the enemy will be unable to alter the landscape making him virtually useless.



ROBOCOD

There are loads of cheats for this game, but here's a few that are more than useful. To activate them type in THE LITTLE MERMAID at any time and the following keys will do strange things:

F – Gives Pond wings
X – Takes him straight to the exit
P – Gives him the aeroplane, but only on appropriate levels
B – Gives him the bathtub, but only on appropriate levels
M – Is a random warp effect



For ultimate invulnerability press the CTRL key and the screen will flash, pressing RETURN now will make Pond invulnerable. To deactivate it press RETURN once more.

TURRICAN 2

This classic blast is a CU AMIGA team favourite. So it's lucky that we got this cheat, eh? From the title screen press HELP to access the music selection screen. Now press 1, 4, 2, ESC, ESC to get infinite lives.

ACTION REPLAY CODES

Loads of you have been asking for Action Replay codes. So to keep you happy and give you a helping hand here's some for two recent smash hits.

LEMMINGS 2

On each level you are presented with up to eight icons, each representing a particular Lemming skill. To boost these skills to the maximum 99 follow these simple instructions.

1. Press red freeze button.
2. Press the M key.
3. Type in the code from the list below.
4. Press RETURN, type 99, press RETURN, then X, then RETURN.
5. Unfreeze and carry on playing.

The codes for each icon are as follows:

ICON 1	C13573
ICON 2	C13575
ICON 3	C13577
ICON 4	C13579
ICON 5	C1357B
ICON 6	C1357D
ICON 7	C1357F
ICON 8	C13581

ALIEN BREED '92

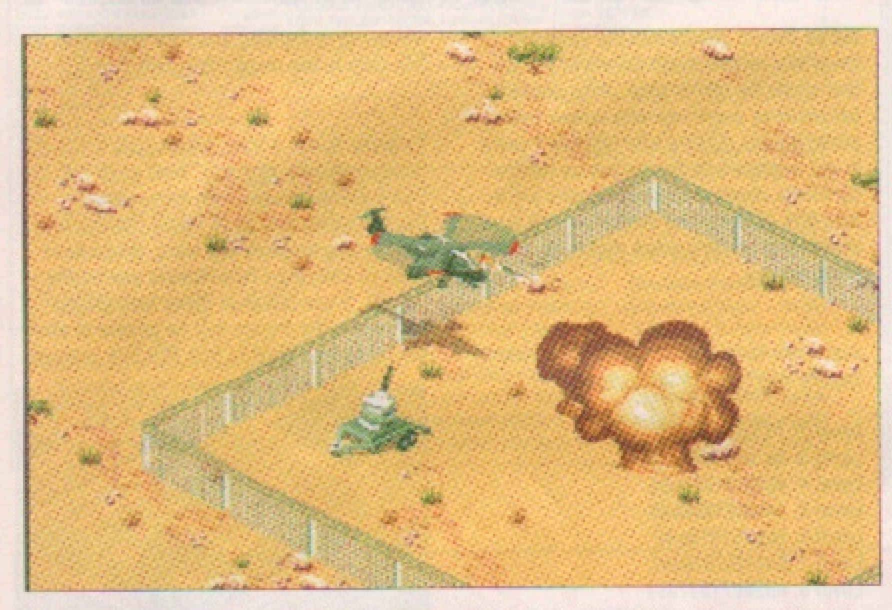
To give yourself a boost in Team 17's top-down shoot' em up use this procedure. Do it right and your alien zappers will have maximum goodies.

1. Freeze the action.
2. Press the M key
3. Type in one of the following:

	Player 1	Player 2
Lives	CO5C7	CO6167
Ammo	CO59CB	CO616B
Keys	CO59D3	CO6175

DESERT STRIKE

With a crazed dictator threatening nuclear armageddon, Electronic Arts are here to save the world with their own hints and tips for this top-notch strategic shoot 'em up.



Hit the radar stations hard and fast before heading off to the power station and airfields. Watch out for the anti-aircraft emplacements protecting the radar sites.

CAMPAIGN ONE: AIR SUPERIORITY

Don't undertake any of the missions out of order. If you do, you'll probably find yourself being shot down from the skies, as certain tasks MUST be carried out in order. For instance, the first mission involves taking out the enemy radar stations. If you ignore them, and move on to demolish the power station, you'll find that the enemy units defending the station will be alerted to your presence and able to track you much more easily! Similarly, don't attempt to attack the air fields until you've destroyed the power station – if you go to the heavily defended air fields prematurely, they will be on full alert.

The weapons of the northern airfield are facing in a clockwise direction. The best tactic for attacking the field is to approach from the north, or twelve o'clock, then proceed around the perimeter in a clockwise direction, destroying the enemy units as you go. Once the defenses are gone, take out the planes and buildings. Several buildings contain individuals with APHIDs, so be prepared for evasive action.

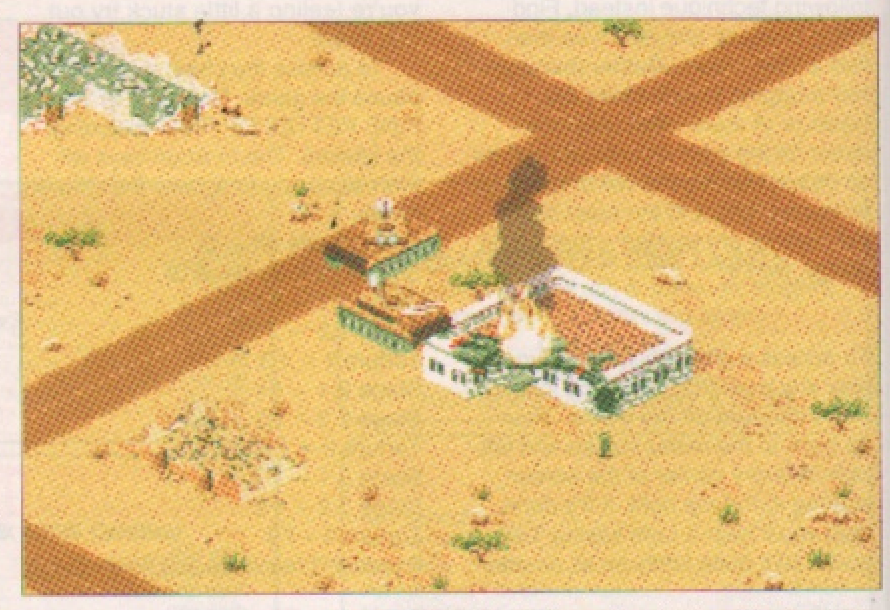
Mission four requires you to destroy one of two command centres and take the commander prisoner. If you accidentally kill the first commander, you must go for the second one. If both are killed, you'll have to restart the entire campaign again. It's best to use Hydras or Hellfires when taking out the command bunker since stray rounds from the chain gun could target the commander.

CAMPAIGN TWO: SCUD BUSTER

In addition to protecting the three jails, the radar sites protect each other from south to north. That is, the southernmost radar protects the middle radar, and the middle radar protects the northernmost radar. Therefore, you should attack the radar sites from south to north.

When you attack the jails, be sure to stop firing after you have blown a hole in the wall. The prisoners will run through the hole and come to the helicopter. Let them run out as far as they can before you come in after them. Keep your eyes peeled for ZSU tanks – one will show up during each jail break.

The power station is guarded by several soldiers with AK47s and APHIDs. The man on the power



Once you've blown a hole in the wall be careful with the chain gun. You don't want to shoot your own guys by mistake. A couple of tanks will turn up every time you attack so watch out for 'em.

TOP SECRET MISSION ONE SPECIAL ITEMS

QUICK LADDER
The Quick Ladder/Super Winch can lift people and supplies into the 'copter at a much faster rate than a conventional winch. In Campaign One, it's located just east of the centre of the map in a group of four barracks.

EXTRA LIFE
This item can be found on the far east side of the map, just south of centre where the roads form a square. Destroy the largest of the three buildings to uncover the box.

TOP SECRET MISSION TWO SPECIAL ITEMS

QUICK LADDER
This time the super winch is located in the southwest corner of the northern-most jail city. Look for the white, L-shaped building.

EXTRA LIFE
Once you've located the downed F-15 in the upper right corner of the map, blow it to bits so that you can retrieve the extra life. The lost co-pilot, Carlos Valdez, will also be found here – he's a much better shot than any other co-pilot, so make sure you use him from now on.

TOP SECRET MISSION THREE SPECIAL ITEMS

QUICK LADDER
To locate the Super Winch check out the tan-coloured building with arched sides in the southeast sector of the city with the UN Inspectors. Destroy the building to uncover the winch.

EXTRA LIFE
The extra life is found underneath one of the sand dunes at the missile silo in the lower left corner of the map. If you're trigger happy, you run the risk of destroying it, so be careful with that gun.

TOP SECRET MISSION FOUR SPECIAL ITEMS

QUICK LADDER
The super-fast winch is located in the oil fields, towards the north end.

EXTRA LIFE
Two extra lives are located in the southern city. One is in the northern sector of the city in a building with arched sides surrounded by grass. The second is in the south western sector inside the long rectangular building. A third extra life is waiting in the President's city, inside a grey building with four spires north of the Palace.

CHEAT MODE CHEAT MODE CHEAT MODE

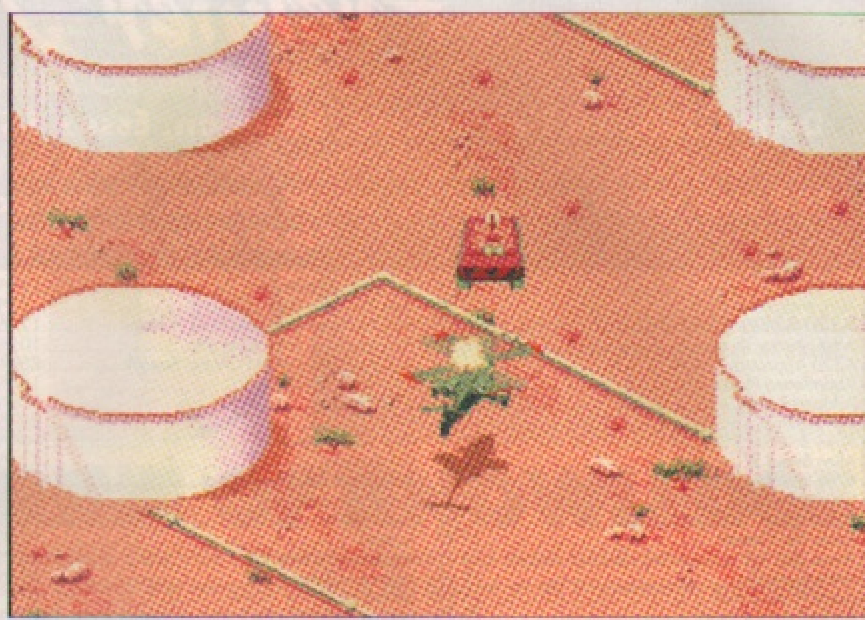
When the going gets tough, the tough reach for their cheat modes. And yes, *Desert Strike's* got lots of 'em. If you want to put your Apache 'copter through its paces, type in the following codes to access later levels.

Level 2 – LQLQQRR
Level 3 – ALHHHZV
Level 4 – JEWOOMD

For a special challenge game, type in HARDCASE. This grants your Apache unlimited weapons, but low armour points.



Why is it that you can wait for a UN Inspector all day then two turn up at once! Take the tank out before you even consider picking them up or you'll be making an untimely return to the earth.



Blow up all the tanks before you enter the oilfields as they don't offer much in the way of manouverability. You could end up as a sitting duck.

station roof cannot be taken out, but he only has ten shots. Work your way across the front of the station, knocking out the gunners and letting the man on the roof deplete his ammo. Then fire on the power station. When the station blows up, so will the soldier on the roof. Once you've blown up the power station, you'll find an armour toolbox.

The Scud Commanders will not appear on your map until you have destroyed the chemical plant. Work your way from south to north. After you find a commander, go directly to the Scud missile site. You must take the launcher out quickly or it will launch a Scud.

At the POW camp, attack one building at a time. Each time you open a building, more tanks roll in. If you do not clear out the POWs and tanks before going to the next building, you will be quickly overwhelmed.

CAMPAIGN THREE: EMBASSY CITY

The missile silos are hidden beneath the desert sand dunes. When you are in the vicinity, use your chain gun to locate the silo. You'll hear the sound change to a metallic thud once you've hit the metal base. Use your chain gun or heavier weapons to take them out – don't take too long about it though, as each silo is capable of firing an ICBM! The inland silos are often hidden among a group of dunes. Each dune contains useful items, APHIDs, or both. Be careful not to be too trigger happy or you'll destroy valuable fuel, ammo or armour.

Mission six is one of the trickiest in the entire game. The Madman's yacht is located in the southwest corner of the play area. If you arrive before destroying the power station, the yacht will be on full alert. You will also notice that the hole you blow in the side of the yacht will not be large enough for the men to escape if you arrive prematurely. Once the prisoners are in the water, you've only got about eight seconds to pick them up, so it's a good idea to have already collected the Quick Ladder. Make sure you let the people swim out from the ship as far as possible before going in for them. If you bump the ship, you will lose control long enough for that person to drown. You must save eight of the twelve people, which will require two trips. When you leave the area, the person in the water will stay there and his time will resume as soon as you return – just like real life!!

The seventh mission is even harder! Most of the buildings you need to destroy in search of the enemy ambassador will contain powerful weapons aimed directly at your Apache. However, it's important to hold your fire, to make sure the ambassador is not sheltering inside. Also, watch out that he doesn't run into the streets and get between you and some enemy forces, as he could get sliced up in the crossfire.

Once you've located the embassy and your co-pilot's commandeered the bus, you've got to escort it to the Navy Seals camp. Always look ahead of the bus and if you spot trouble, hover over the vehicle to make it stop. Watch out, though, as you don't want to be shot down over the bus as you'll crush the prisoners inside and your co-pilot will them be listed as MIA for the rest of the game! One extra hint: if you run low on fuel or ammo, leave the immediate area and take on extra supplies – the bus will stop until you return.

CAMPAIGN FOUR: NUCLEAR STORM

The commando bunker is located just inside the sand dunes along the shore. Fly to the north until you find the commando leader waving at you, then pick up all six soldiers. Once done, fly to the oil fields and take out the nine enemy tanks before they destroy the oil tanks. One tank is situated in the middle of the field; approach it from the north. Don't attempt to fly into the oilfield until you have destroyed all the tanks as there's little room for manoeuvre and you'll be an easy target.



Locate the commando bunker and rescue all the guys before you head off into the oil fields.

Each of the bomb shelters in mission three is guarded by two tanks, most of them buried in the sand with only their turrets visible. To take them out, you must first clear away the dune, usually with your chain gun, then fire your missiles at the tanks. After you've secured the area, fire your chain gun at the door and jink around and listen until you hear that your shots are hitting home.

Your goal in mission four is to destroy five of the six garbage trucks carrying nuclear bomb parts. Do not destroy any of the four trucks carrying innocent civilians – you are only allowed to make one mistake! To determine which trucks are carrying nuclear material, you must see the payload in the rear. If the truck is driving at an angle that does not allow you to see the payload, wait until it turns in another direction. The nuclear payload looks like canisters.

The final mission involves a race against time to stop general Kilbaba launching a nuclear bomber. Unfortunately, the plane comes with a hefty 3000 armour points, so fire at will with all you've got! You've only got about thirty seconds before the bomber reaches the end of the runway, so good luck!

GENERAL TIPS

- If you're attacking coastal positions, approach them from the sea as you don't use any fuel over water, so you can take your time.
- It's best to uncover as much hidden fuel and ammo as possible early in each campaign so you know where to go in an emergency.
- Don't waste your valuable missiles on inanimate objects – use your chain gun if you're not in a hurry.
- Remember that some objects such as buildings are neutral and are not automatically targeted. You may have to jink your helicopter to line up the shot.
- There are lots of Armour Repair Toolboxes scattered about each level, especially in the later campaigns. There is always one secreted beneath a power station.

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THE TROLLS HEAD

RULES OF THE INN

1. Patrons wishing to drink Old Peculiar Beer must sit at the rear of the bar – and use the seat belts provided!
2. Whilst the present windy weather continues, patrons are reminded that they must use the windows on the north side of the Inn to vomit out of.
3. The annual convention of the Grand Imperial Lords of the Universe, and Masters of the Dark Reaches Society has unfortunately been cancelled – their wives won't let them come.
4. Owing to the large number of complaints caused by the Pig Curry, the outside toilet has now been fitted with splatter guards.

By Order of The Innkeeper

When the sun dips behind the horizon, and glittering eyes begin to appear amidst the dark shades which form between the trees, where you gonna go? To the Troll's Head Inn of course. Here you'll find safety, good cheer, and a sympathetic shoulder to cry on.

HEROES NOT WANTED BOARD!

It is with regret that the Worshipful Company of Adventurers has been forced to announce the postponement of two major quests:–

Captive II – (Mindscape). Owing to circumstances beyond our control, the *Captive II* expedition will not now take place until the Autumn – at least it won't be taking place on floppy disk. No official statement has been issued from Mindscape's lofty towers, but glimpses have been seen of a glittering CD ROM being prepared for an imminent release.

Crusaders of the Dark Savant – (SirTech). Six months ago, role players were promised that this latest episode in the *Wizardry* series would be available by Christmas. Foolishly we didn't think to ask, 'Which Christmas?' It would appear that SirTech are having problems getting this adventure to perform satisfactorily on the basic Amiga, so it looks like *Wizardry* fans will have to grit their teeth for a few months yet.

THE SHRINE OF KNOWLEDGE

Draw near and ask your question. Don't be embarrassed, even the most noble adventurer is sometimes stuck for a clue. Behind the velvet curtain is the Shrine of all Knowledge where the deepest secrets are revealed and hearts are laid bare.

FUTURE WARS

Having successfully worked out how to work the time machine in *Future Wars*, Tony Coulson has managed to transport himself from his native Northampton, back through time to the Medieval Age. A short walk through a swamp, a skip past a river bank and then he comes to a grinding halt in a muddy village where two monks beat him to a pulp! So much for that old adage that travel broadens the mind!

The Shrine replies: Hell hath no fury like our religious brethren, especially when you don't belong to their sect. After spending all night on their knees praying for the souls of men, monks are inclined to give you a thick lip if you get in their way, especially if you are strolling around dressed in Levis and trainers. To stay out of trouble you've got to find the right clothes. Return to the riverside and you'll find a tree which you can climb. Wait for a moment and one of the monks from the nearby monastery will turn up for his morning swim. You can now nip down the tree – and get into a dirty habit... At this point I'll also answer Russell Goodyer's plea as he needs to know that there is a small flag lying on the floor of the toilet at the beginning of this game, which is the object he needs to stick into the map.

MONKEY ISLAND II

A few of the inhabitants of Belgium are feeling distinctly sorry for themselves, and Joer Willems has written on their behalf to plead for help with *Monkey Island II*. The problem which is bending their brains is how to get the key from the coffin salesman. Joer also knows that he can get Kate arrested and thrown in jail by putting her picture on top of the Wanted Poster, but he doesn't know why he should do it.

Deep in the Caribbean
Scabb Island

A pirate's life isn't all rum and skittles. Things can get pretty nasty in the steamy Caribbean as our intrepid adventurers are finding out.

The Shrine replies: Getting arrested and thrown in jail once is bad enough, but you don't want to make a habit of it, do you? You will have to return to the island more than once and you may not be able to escape from prison so easily the next time, so it makes good sense to get Kate arrested in your place. Once you've got your friend locked up (some friend you are!), you can go to the jail and let her out and at the same time find any new items to be picked up. The first time you visit Stan's Coffin Shop you'll be given a handkerchief, but before you bother paying a second visit you need to get a hammer and some nails from the woodsmiths to seal him in his coffin. As 'Woody' won't let you take these items while he's around you'll need to get him out of the shop. Go to the Drycleaners and saw off the pirate's wooden leg and that will keep 'Woody' busy for a while.

BANE OF THE COSMIC FORGE

A scribbled note was delivered to the inn by carrier pigeon this morning. Unfortunately the signature could not be deciphered by even the most skilful scribe in the bar, but the sender's address was 32 Armoured Engineers in BFPO 104. The address also contained a long figure which is either the writer's Army number, or his Experience Points! Our hero is having many problems with the *Bane of the Cosmic Forge*, amongst which are:– What is the purpose of the Mystery Oil? Where does one find the ring? Is there a hint book available?

The Shrine replies: There certainly is a hint book available for this game. U.S. Gold in Birmingham should be able to sell you one direct, (021 625 3388) although I would have thought that any big software shop could obtain one for you – try Strategic Plus Software, 28 The Courtyard, High Street, Hampton Hill, Middlesex TW12 1PD (081-977-8088). The Mystery Oil is a wonderful de-rusting liquid which will help you open a particularly stiff metal cover found later in the game. The ring is needed to decipher the logbook which is found amongst the remains of a skeleton. The JR Decoder ring is found on the finger of a prisoner in chains in the second section of the lower level. To enter this area you must have the Dungeon Key. The Dungeon key can be found if you search one of the rooms in the hazard area. The log will tell you where the treasure is buried. Tell Quequeg where the treasure is buried and he'll tell you the password for the Captain's Den.

DUNGEON MASTER

Les and Rob Woods left their homes in Enfield (no doubt leaving their bedrooms in the same shambles that they normally do), and set off in search of the fabled Firestaff. The evening breeze has brought their cry for help from the very depths of the Dungeon where they are stumbling around on Level 9, tired and confused. They found two Ra keys which opened the first two doors of the Tomb of the Firestaff, but they can find no other key to

»

» open a further locked door. Just when they thought things could get no worse a giant rat has appeared and is giving them much grief.

The Shrine replies: Isn't it always the case that, just when things seem to be at their worst, some rat turns up to make things even worser? (Yes I know, but in this case, 'worser' seems to fit the bill.) Forget about the third Ra key for a moment, that key is far away and not worth worrying about. The rats turn up on Level 9, and there is a sign on the wall which says, 'When is a rock not a rock?' The wall next to this sign is an illusion and you can walk through it.



We would have hoped that everyone would have finished exploring the depths of the Dungeon Master's domain, but it appears that there are still a few stragglers who need the advice of the Shrine.

BARD'S TALE III

I get depressed when I receive letters from readers who claim to be very old – and then state their age, which turns out to be considerably less than my own. R. Hayes, who is a mere child of 46 and hails from Plymouth, is having problems with *Bard's Tale III*, plus the onset of senility. There are three towers in the Ice Keep and he can't get into any of them.

The Shrine replies: From level one of the Keep you can use the APAR spell to take you to the entrance of the three towers. Black Tower – Use APAR 0N, 10E to take you to the black wall in the southeast corner. Cast GRRE (or MAFL) SHSP, FEAR, SUEL and SPBI to enter. White Tower – Use APAR 9N,0E to take you to the magic curtain in the northeast corner, then cast LEVI, ANMA and PHDO to enter the p assage. Grey Tower – Use APAR 0N, -11E followed by casting INWO, WIE, FOFO and INVI to enter.

As these pearls of wisdom roll across the ale-stained floor of the tavern, the magical glow from the Shrine fades and finally dies, leaving only the echo of its final piece of advice, 'Never give a Troll an even break'.

Getting around the large playing area of *Bards Tale III* can be a tricky business, but if you know the APAR spell, plus the correct map co-ordinates, you can leave your seven-league boots in the cupboard.



WRITE BACK

If you have a problem, a notice for the Board, or perhaps you have a piece of scandal which you wish to whisper in the Inn, write to Tony Gill at: The Troll's Head Inn, CU Amiga, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS

I thought *Lure of the Temptress* was an easy game, but there is always someone who manages to get themselves stuck. Andy Halkyard of Cheshire has got practically nowhere with the adventure and states that he is completely 'cheesed off with it'. Having arrived in the village and found a knife, flask, tinderbox, broken glass and 13 groats, he now is at a loss as what to do next. From previous Trolls Head letters he has deduced that there is a lockpick and a diary to be found, but doesn't know where.

The Shrine replies: Find Luthern, (he's probably in the forge) and give him the flask. Talk to him and he will tell you about someone called Grub. Go to the Magpie courtyard and talk to the stranger who is lying outside the pub on the floor. Be gentle with him as I suspect he is feeling tired and emotional after drinking Old Peculiar beer. This character is Grub and he will give you the lockpick. Give the lockpick to Ratpouch as he is obviously the smarter one of the pair of you.

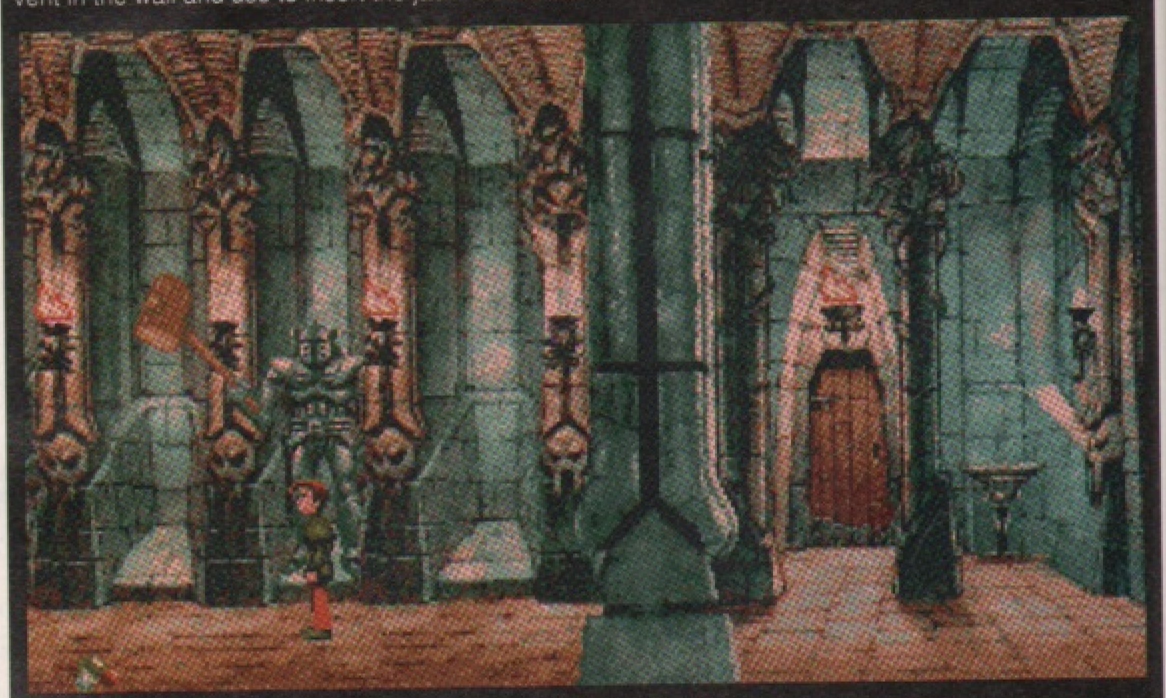


Peeping through windows isn't a crime in the *Lure of the Temptress*, in fact it can gain you useful information. Pick your moment when the Skorl guard is being served, and it could pay dividends.

CURSE OF ENCHANTIA

Philip Proctor has written to tell me that he comes from Sheffild, but of course I know better. Using the magic of the Shrine, (plus my uncanny powers of detection) I figured out that he really comes from Sheffield. Never mind Philip you can't be good looking and be good at speeling. Apart from the aforementioned word-blindness, this boy is in deep trouble in the Land of Enchantia. Having passed through the Costume Shop he made it to the Ice Palace where he picked eight objects, including something which looks like a car jack. At this point he came to an abrupt halt.

The Shrine replies: I assume you know you must FIGHT with the Broom to get the gun? Now insert the gun into the snake's head pulley on the left. Once the pulley has been activated you will be able to walk over to the right and pick up the bottle of grease and the glass. Go to the end of the corridor and you'll be able to get a whistle. Use the whistle with the megaphone. Fight with the megaphone. Jump to the hole. Go to the hole in the floor on the far right. Use the magnifying glass with hole. Go to the hole in the floor on the far left. Use square prism with hole. Go to hole on the left and use icicle with hole. Go to the remaining hole and use the glass with the hole. The laser beam will now short circuit. Go to the vent in the wall and use to insert the jack into the vent.



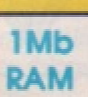
Having escaped from your prison cell, you now need some nimble footwork to avoid getting thumped as you tiptoe from the witch's palace in the Curse of Enchantia.

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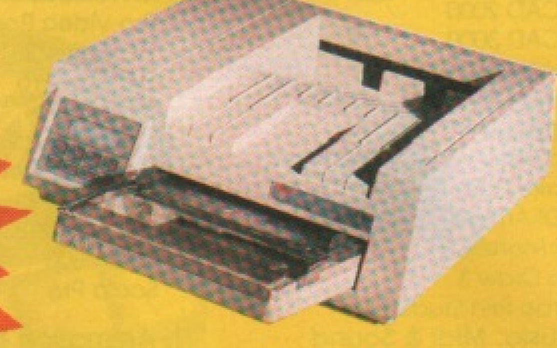
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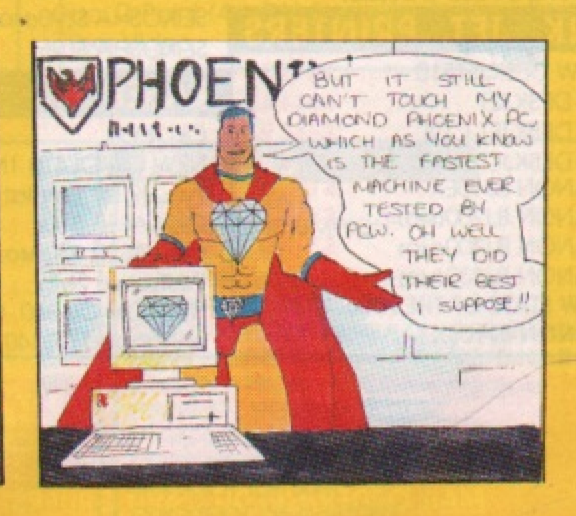












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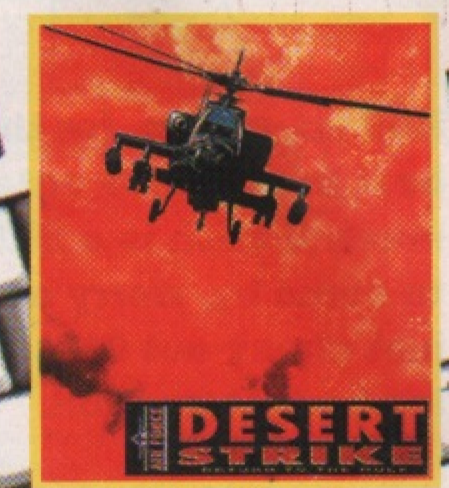
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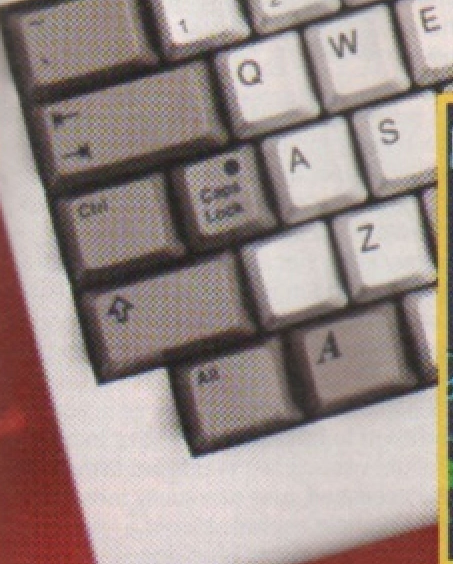
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1. This competition is not open to employees of EMAP Images/The Boots Company PLC.
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3. All entries must be received before July 20th 1993. Results will be published in a future issue of CU AMIGA. There will be no cash alternative to the prizes.
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THE ADDAMS FAMILY

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Those creepy and kooky members of The Addams Family are the stars of this Mario-inspired platform romp. Taking control of a moustachioed Gomez sprite, it's up to you to guide the Fez-wearing philanderer around a series of platform-packed levels in a frantic bid to rescue his kidnapped wife and children. Apparently, a ruthless property dealer has spirited away Morticia, Fester and the rest of the Addams clan and is holding them to ransom until Gomez signs over the deeds to his family home.

Each character has been hidden in a different section of the sprawling family mansion, so Gomez must visit all five wings of the house to secure their release. It's not as simple as that, though, as each level is stuffed to the gills with all manner of marauding nasties and end-of-level guardians and these can only be defeated by bouncing repeatedly on their bonces. Fail to pull off this tricky manoeuvre and you'll more than likely lose some much-needed energy and eventually forfeit a life. As you only start the game with five lives, it's best to time your moves to perfection, otherwise you'll suffer the consequences.

The Gomez sprite can be made to perform all kinds of acrobatic twists and turns at the tug of a joystick, with the fire button used to propel him through the air. He's every bit as manoeuvrable as Nintendo's Mario character and there's even a Fez-copter to reach some of the game's more inaccessible areas. The in-game graphics are striking enough, although some of the backgrounds are a little lacklustre, and the music is a suitably jolly piece. Where the game falls down is in the collision detection. You can be nowhere near an outcropping spike or incoming cannonball and yet still get zapped. That's a great pity as it ruins an otherwise excellent game.

Of course, there are all the usual bonus rooms and hidden stages you'd expect in a game of this nature, and most are stuffed to the gills with power-ups and life-giving tokens. Each level is also based on a particular theme, so you've got a garden stage populated with carrot-crunching killer rabbits and a huge egg-bombing bird and a kitchen level which features an army of knife-wielding chefs. When the game was released a year ago, it scooped up awards by the truck load, but things look a little jaded now and there are more polished contenders for your cash on the shelves.

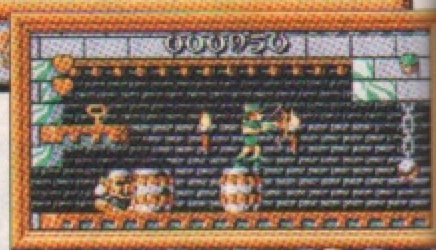
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ROBIN HOOD – LEGEND QUEST

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Despite some god-awful scrolling, this is really quite a playable platform game. Taking much of its inspiration from the Bitmaps' *Gods*, *Robin Hood – Legend Quest* pits the player against the evil lackeys of the Sheriff of Nottingham who has imprisoned Maid Marion in his heavily fortified castle. Standing between Robin and his girl are a series of rooms, tunnels and passages as well as a goodly number of trolls, fire breathing gargoyles, dwarves and axe men. Initially, only a small part of the castle is accessible but this is soon opened up by collecting some of the many keys that are scattered around each level. Once collected, these will trigger hidden passageways or open locked doors through which our hero can proceed. There's also a skip load of hidden treasure to find along the way which must be collected and given back to the peasants.

Each enemy is taken out by firing a number of arrows in their direction, although the patrolling dwarves are too short to be hit, so they have to be avoided instead. After an initial exploration, various secret passageways open up through which more treasure can be accessed, and eventually these will lead to the dungeons where Marion is being held captive. It's not a particularly fast-paced game, but there's enough in it to keep you coming back for more.

65%

SUPERSKI 2

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Superski 2 centres its action around the six Olympic events of the Downhill, Slalom and Giant Slalom, Ski Jump, the Hot-Dog (!?) and the Bobsleigh. The manual seems to imply that Olympic contestants actually take part in all six events – that's patently wrong – and as for including Hot-Dogging as an Olympic event, well it just isn't. Leaving aside these little inaccuracies the main question remains – how does it play? The answer – badly.

For most events you view the action from a position slightly behind your sprite. Rather like the slot view in flight sims. This is OK as far as it goes, so it's disconcerting for some events, like the ski jump, to suddenly present you with a front view. In that event the sprite starts off at the top of the ramp as a tiny blob and has a tendency to fly off at an angle before he even starts the jump. The other events are rather easier to master; the Downhill for example simply requires you to steer left and right and pull back to brake.

There's just something about *Superski* that reminds me of the days of C64 gaming. The sprites are basic, the in-game sound effects non-existent and the overall look is simplistic. This game is only really worth a look if you're an avid skier but can't scrape together the air fare to Val D'Isere this year.

48%



CRYSTALS OF ARBOREA

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This game comes from the same guys that brought us *Ishar: Legend of the Fortress* and is effectively that game's prequel. It tells the story of Prince Jarel and his six companions and their struggle to rid the land Arborea of Morgoth, Lord of Chaos. This dastardly dude has stolen the Crystals of Harmony and, in their sorrow, the gods have drowned the whole world except for the land of Arborea, where the Crystals are hidden. Jarel and his chums are out to find the Crystals and return them to their rightful place.

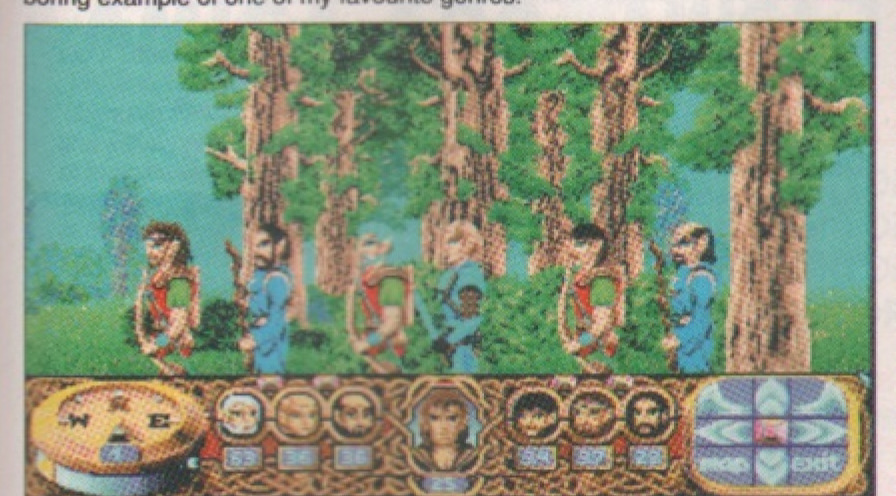
Crystals of Arborea is another standard role-playing adventure which aims to blend strategy into the action. The only real differences are that it's set above ground and not in some remote and implausible dungeon and that you can spilt the party up and send them off to do different things.

Apart from that it's fairly average. You take control over all seven characters viewing the 3D world through Jarel's eyes but controlling the movement and actions of the other party members from the main map screen. This lends itself to some annoying screen swapping in order to get the men to carry out your commands.

The main map is quite small but it's fairly deceptive as it hides over 16000 locations, which only appear once they're in line of sight. These locations, once found, contain clues to the location of the Crystals and, it has to be said, are pretty well drawn. Dotted about the land are roving bands of monsters out for blood. If you can't avoid them you'll end up on the battle screen, which is a top-down two-dimensional grid affair and the most boring way of depicting a fight I ever saw.

This sort of sums up the game as a whole. It's a strange mix of viewing styles that don't gel very well. Ultimately, it's a pointless and boring example of one of my favourite genres.





INTERNATIONAL SOCCER CHALLENGE

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When it comes to classifying computer games, this definitely falls into the 'better off dead and buried' category.

Basically this is an attempt at a 3D soccer game, and providing you're not expecting much in the way of moves, action or goals and know nothing about the sport, you might enjoy this for the first game.

The gameplay is truly appalling – even the computer teams seem to have trouble scoring. It's not that the goal keepers are any good, it's just that the ball not only deflects off them, but the surrounding three feet of space as well!

The 3D effect works OK, it's just that the pitch scrolls jerkily. The sound is another massive down point – pathetic effects jostle with awful tunes for speaker space and the combined effect is enough to reduce any music lover to tears.

There's only one reason to buy this game, and that's because it contains a voucher entitling you to another game absolutely free (provided you stump up £1.50 P&P).

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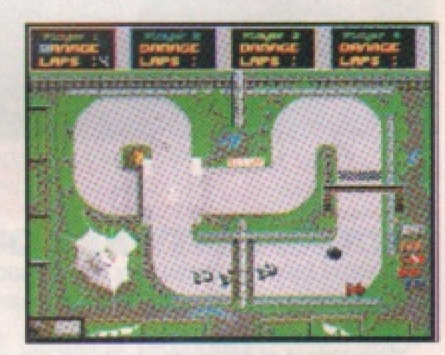
On the surface, four games for £10 sounds like a good buy, doesn't it?! Well, don't be conned, as there isn't a good game in this Codemasters compilation. The closest that comes to games playing respectability is *Violator*, yet another in a long line of Apache gunship sims which owe more than a doff of the hat to classic blasts such as *SWIV* and *Sidewinder*. Yes, you guessed it, it's a vertically scrolling shoot 'em up but without the panache of the above mentioned titles. The idea is to blast your way up the screen, taking out all the hostile planes, 'copters, tanks and gun emplacements which clutter up the screen whilst taking care not to soak up too much in-coming enemy fire. Starting with five lives, there are numerous bonus weapons scattered around each level, including Sidewinder and Cruise missiles, as well as smart bombs which are released after a spot of frantic joystick waggling. But it's a derivative blast all the same and merely reminded me of one of those interminable SEUCK games that clog up the PD scene.

Super Grand Prix looks a little like a *Super Sprint* or *Super Cars* clone at first glance, until you come to play it. With all the responsiveness of a lump of granite, you can choose to drive a Formula One car, a 500cc motor bike, a supercharged dragster or one of a number of different vehicles which take part in an Open Championship. These range from a JVC digger (!) and Chieftain tank through to a Big Foot truck and cop car. The action takes place over a number of different single screen tracks, but there's very little variety, and although there's an option for up to four players to take part, I doubt whether you'd want to show this off to your mates.

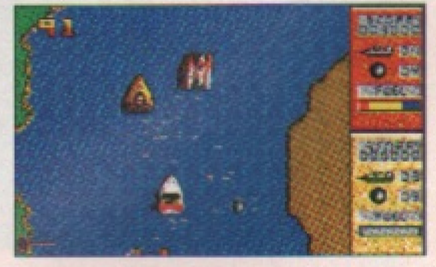
The third and fourth games in the set are fairly similar. *Pro Powerboat Simulator* puts you in control of a speed boat as you race up a vertically scrolling screen avoiding enemy boats and obstacles whilst laying mines to take out some of your competitors. *Nitro Boost* involves a similar challenge, only this time you get a choice of taking control of a sportscar or a power boat. Nitrous Oxide canisters are scattered around the course which help Turbo charge your vehicle and other cars do their best to ram you off the road. Both are fairly dire affairs and better examples of this type of game exist in the Public Domain.

Don't waste your money!

22%







»

BATTLE SQUADRON

GLOBAL SOFTWARE OUT NOW £7.99

For quite some time *Battle Squadron* was the top dog when it came to shoot 'em ups. Now, several years on, it returns on budget to a market that is flooded with action blasters.

This game is about as straightforward as you can get. The screen scrolls from top to bottom and you simply have to zap everything that moves. It helps to get hold of a mate and have a crack in two-player mode as the later levels are a lot easier when you've got double the fire power.

Extra weapon pods periodically float down from the top of the screen and collecting these boosts your ship's fire power. It's essential to pick up as many of these as possible on the first level as good weapons are essential from the second stage on. The drawback is that when you lose a life your weapon is down graded which makes life very difficult indeed.

The graphics are extremely colourful, which makes it difficult to distinguish some of the smaller ships from the background. As it stands *Battle Squadron* can be difficult enough without these additional problems.

With the onset of age *Battle Squadron* has lost much of its appeal when compared to more recent shoot 'em ups such as *Project X*. On the plus side it will keep you playing a lot longer than most games.

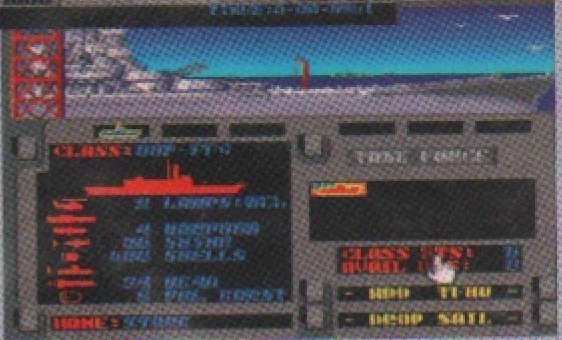
82%



STRIKE FLEET

HIT SQUAD OUT NOW £12.99

This game's title may suggest astounding acts of heroics on the high seas, but unfortunately it doesn't quite live up to expectations. Yes you can use missiles, torpedoes and guns against enemy ships, but even the lowliest Iranian gunboat seems to be capable of shooting down anti-ship missiles.



Ultimately, what lets *Strike Fleet* down is its lack of visible action. If you're in charge of a fleet of several ships, most of the time it's impossible to keep track of what's going on and you're merely left launching missiles at blips on the radar screen.

I thought that using my ship's massive guns would be a laugh, but no matter what I did I couldn't get close enough to anything to try them out. Imaginative, but deeply flawed, *Strike Fleet* is still overpriced even in the budget bracket.

59%

POPULOUS: THE PROMISED LANDS

HIT SQUAD OUT NOW £12.99

This game has appeared so many times on compilations and budget release that it's almost impossible to imagine anyone not already having a copy.

In the unlikely event that the name *Populous* just means densely populated to you, here's how the game works. You play a god, who has to battle it out with a rival deity for possession of a number of worlds.

Being a god you've got an arsenal of excellent powers at your disposal, ranging from the ability to raise and lower land, to causing earthquakes and volcanoes. While it's good fun wiping out enemy villages, you've also got to take care of your guys by levelling land for them to build on.

The accompanying *Promised Lands* disks provides five new landscapes to play on. While these don't alter the gameplay, being the God of Blockland is a good laugh.

This is great value for money if you're one of the minority who hasn't got this game – although you should shop around, as you might be able to find it on a compilation (albeit without *The Promised Lands*) for only a few quid more.

81%

THE PLAGUE

GLOBAL SOFTWARE OUT NOW £7.99

This game failed to make any real impact when it made its full-price debut and now, several years later, it has reappeared to lurk around on the budget scene.

The object of the game is, quite simply, to destroy hordes of hideous mutants. At least they would be hideous if the graphics artist had any talent. Instead you're faced with salamander people, strange looking robot snakes and other similarly dull creations.

What really leaves the game dead in the water is its minimal playability. After all, there have been many fine games that lack a graphical punch, so pictures aren't everything The main character isn't very responsive and the attack waves are easy to spot and pick off. That's not to say that *The Plague* is an easy game – in fact the combination of dodgy controls and other gameplay quirks makes it extremely frustrating.



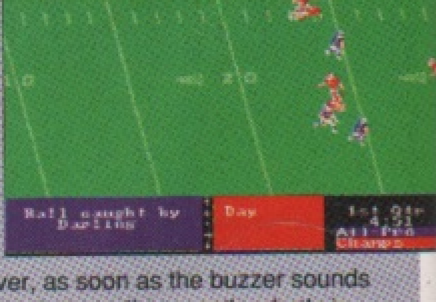
Avoid this like you'd avoid, well, the plague.

46%

4TH & INCHES

HIT SQUAD OUT NOW £7.99

American football may be steadily growing in popularity as a spectator sport in this country, but this game is an unmitigated disaster. At best, *4th & Inches* can only be described as an embarrassing attempt at recreating America's most popular sport.



Once you've gone through the performance of selecting your team and control method, the game still looks like it might hold some potential. However, as soon as the buzzer sounds and the first down gets under way you begin to realise exactly what's in store for you – and end up considerably less impressed as a result.

The graphics are nothing short of awful. All the characters look the same, right down to the number 11 which is emblazoned on all of their shirts. The animation is crude, the pitch scrolls badly and the controls are unresponsive.

There is one redeeming feature, however – there are loads of plays to choose from. Apart from that there's not much else to say, other than reverting to over-used phrases like '£7.99 is too much to pay for a blank disk', etc. Probably the worst American football game ever.

27%

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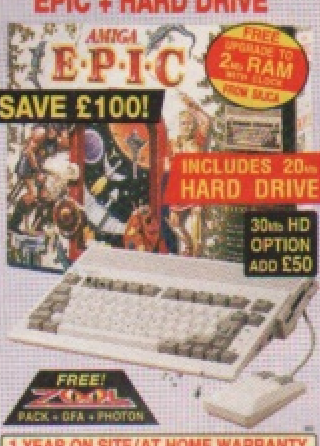
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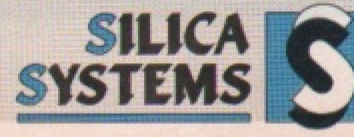
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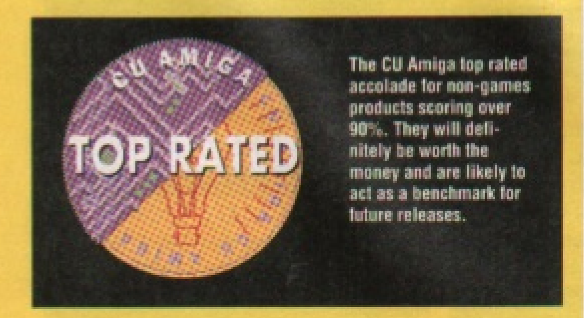
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Which computer(s), if any, do you own? 104D

E&OE - Advertised prices and specifications may change - Please return the coupon for the latest information.

GET SERIOUS

It's time once more to get down to some serious talking as we feast our eyes on another batch of hi-tech wonders.



The CU Amiga top rated accolade for non-games products scoring over 90%. They will definitely be worth the money and are likely to act as a benchmark for future releases.

SAMPLE CDS

Tony 'horrid noises a speciality' Horgan takes a couple of new sample CDs for a spin.

THE WIZARD

19 was a milestone in dance music. Paul Hardcastle's revolutionary use of the sampler pushed it to number one in the world's charts, and started the ball rolling for the sample-based dance explosion of the late 80s. Compiled from Mr Hardcastle's own sample library, The Wizard is another of those very handy all-rounder sample discs.

Techno loops are first on the menu. There are 41 of these, which have been composed especially for the CD, not taken from other records. Most are based on single-bar rhythms played on analogue synths, often looped a number of times with increasing degrees of modulation and filter levels. Put these on a thumping beat, maybe add some chords if you're feeling adventurous, and you've got yourself the basis of a good fartingly-slithering techno track. Some of the loops are based on the same riffs, but played on different sounds, so you don't quite get 41 completely different loops.

Next are 27 keyboard riffs and drop-ins, followed by a rather excessive but comprehensive orchestral section. A dozen basslines put in an appearance, again with a good squidgy analogue flavour, some repeated on different sounds to make up the numbers. A batch of 37 breakbeats is followed by 10 percussion loops, which lead into some single drum samples.

The speech section is a little disappointing, with recreated versions of some dated samples. The vocal ad libs are a lot more useful. Even better are the sax and flute riffs, which have bags of potential for catchy hooks and fills. Various other sounds include synth samples, kung fu vocals, guitar riffs and notes, and single bass samples. Snippets from 19 often crop up, including the 19 sample itself.

Even though some of the sounds are a little out of tune with current trends, the variety means you'll be sampling the CD for many months to come. If you're into loops, this is one of the best CDs around – full of bread and butter samples, with plenty of jam dolloped on top.

Price: £49.95 **81%**

GROOVE CONSTRUCTION

Another new concept from Time and Space, Groove Construction is an alternative breakbeat CD. Instead of taking drum loops from existing records, MJ Dunne has created them all himself. With the CD, you also get a 3.5 inch floppy disk containing MIDI files of the loops on the CD. The idea is that you can either sample the loops straight from the CD, or recreate them with the MIDI files and the separate drum samples also included on the CD.

The MIDI files are in ST format, so you'll need to convert them to AmigaDos first with something like the PD programs MessyDos or MessySID. You could also use them with *OctaMED*, by first getting them into AmigaDos, and then using the AMFC conversion program from Amiganuts (0703 470017). Once you've got them in your sequencer, you can rearrange them to suit your needs, or use the rhythms with your own choice of samples. If you want to keep your sample polyphony for other sounds, you could easily route the loops through a drum machine.

Whatever kind of dance music you're into, there's something for you on the CD. The disc is split into categories for Euro/Techno, Swing/New Jack, Garage, House, Hip Hop/Rap, and Hardcore/Rave. All of them are built from separate drum and sound effect samples, so none are real live breakbeats, but the sound quality is very high. It's interesting to hear someone else's idea of what garage, techno and hip hip are about. The hardcore loops for example, aren't what I would think of as typical examples of hardcore, but then if you want a typical hardcore breakbeat, you can sample one from a typical hardcore record.

Groove Construction shouldn't be viewed as a normal drumloop CD. If that's what you want, you'd be better off looking elsewhere. However, if you want more freedom than single bar drumloops give you, or if you're looking to improve your own groove-creation skills, this could be right up your alley. The addition of the MIDI files is an excellent idea, and one that deserves to succeed.

Price: £39.95 **79%**



Both available from: Time and Space, PO Box 306, Berkhamstead, Herts, HP4 3EP. Tel: 0442 870681.

HYPERCACHE

If you have a need for speed, perhaps you should be swapping your cash for a cache.

The one thing that everyone knows about mass storage devices is that they are never fast enough. CD-ROM… pah! You may get 600Mb of storage on-line, but what good is it to you if it takes an age to read. Even the performance of SCSI hard-drives comes into question when performing demanding tasks.

Hypercache is a small piece of software with a single goal – to speed up all your data acquisition without getting in the way of any other software. It works by setting aside some memory as a buffer to your storage device. When the same file information, for example a directory list, is requested often the data can be supplied direct from this buffer without the need to read the disk. Hypercache uses an LRU algorithm, derived from those used on large mainframe and minicomputer fileservers.

Hypercache will run on virtually any Amiga. It will cope equally well with WB1.2, WB1.3, WB2 and WB3 and there is even a special optimised version for '030 and '040 users. There is no memory requirement, although at least 1Mb is recommended to get the best out of the software. The default cache size is 512K.

A small piece of cunning added to the program even pre-loads information that it predicts you are going to ask for, based on previous experience. The software is fully user-configurable, allowing you to fiddle about with all the parameters and muck things up. More importantly you can change the size of the buffer (which defaults to 512k) to better reflect your needs.

The system as a whole will be useful to everyone who uses software like ray-tracers, databases, animations, compilers or even just Workbench.

Available from: Silicon Prairie Software, 2326 Francis Street, Regina, SK S4N 2P7. Tel: 0101 306 352 0358. Price $49.95 (money order in US currency accepted). Price includes overseas P&P.

83%

CDTV MEMORY SWITCH

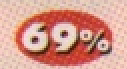
Tony Horgan takes a trip down memory lane.

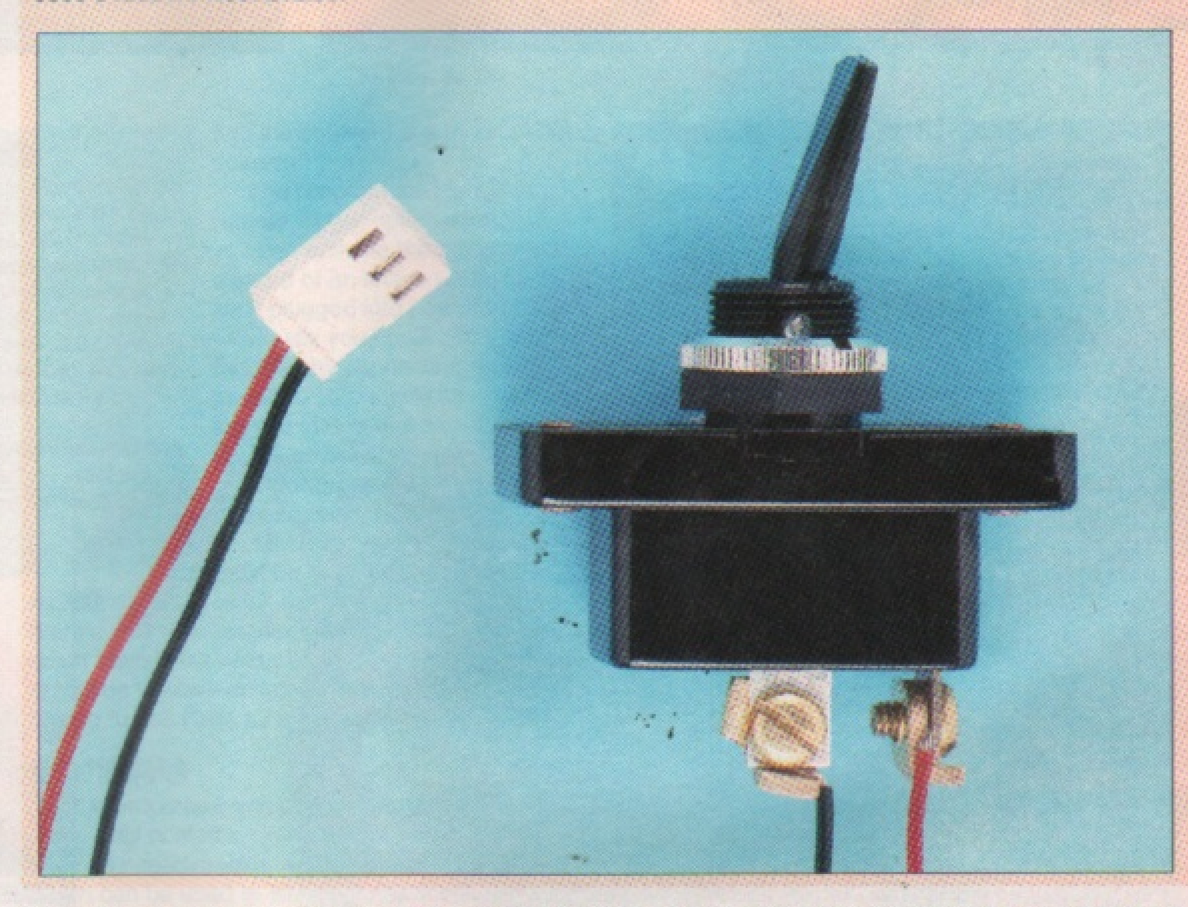
If you've got a 1Mb CDTV, you've probably realised by now that you can't actually use the full megabyte. The CD drive uses a buffer of about 50K to keep the access times as low as possible, but it takes this 50K from your 1Mb of RAM. This isn't too much of a problem in most cases, but some programs need the whole megabyte to run properly. This is the cause of virtually all CDTV incompatibility problems.

The switch simply disables the CD drive, and reclaims that extra 50K. Installing it is quite straightforward, but you have to take the case off the CDTV, which will void your warranty. A diagram is included with the instructions to help you locate the jumper on the circuit board. There's no neat way of passing the wire through the casing of the CDTV, but it works fine if you put it through the gap around the PCMCIA slot at the front (although it does look a bit messy).

It works perfectly, but if the machine breaks down, it'll be up to you to get it fixed. At £12.99 it's a bit pricey, considering the parts can't cost more than about £2. If you fancy a cheaper alternative, take a look at the software option in this issue's PD Utilities section.

Available from: CD Free, 48 Lindisfarne Road, Spennymoor, Co Durham, DL16 6EL. Tel: 0388 813661. Price: £12.99.





CYBERDREAM

Tony Horgan puts on his slippers and relaxes with a cup of Horlicks and a good video.

How do you fancy a bit of 'progressive, uplifting, spiritual house', combined with an eyeful of trance-inducing visuals? Need a break from all that head-banging techno? Then get your sensory organs around Cyberdream.

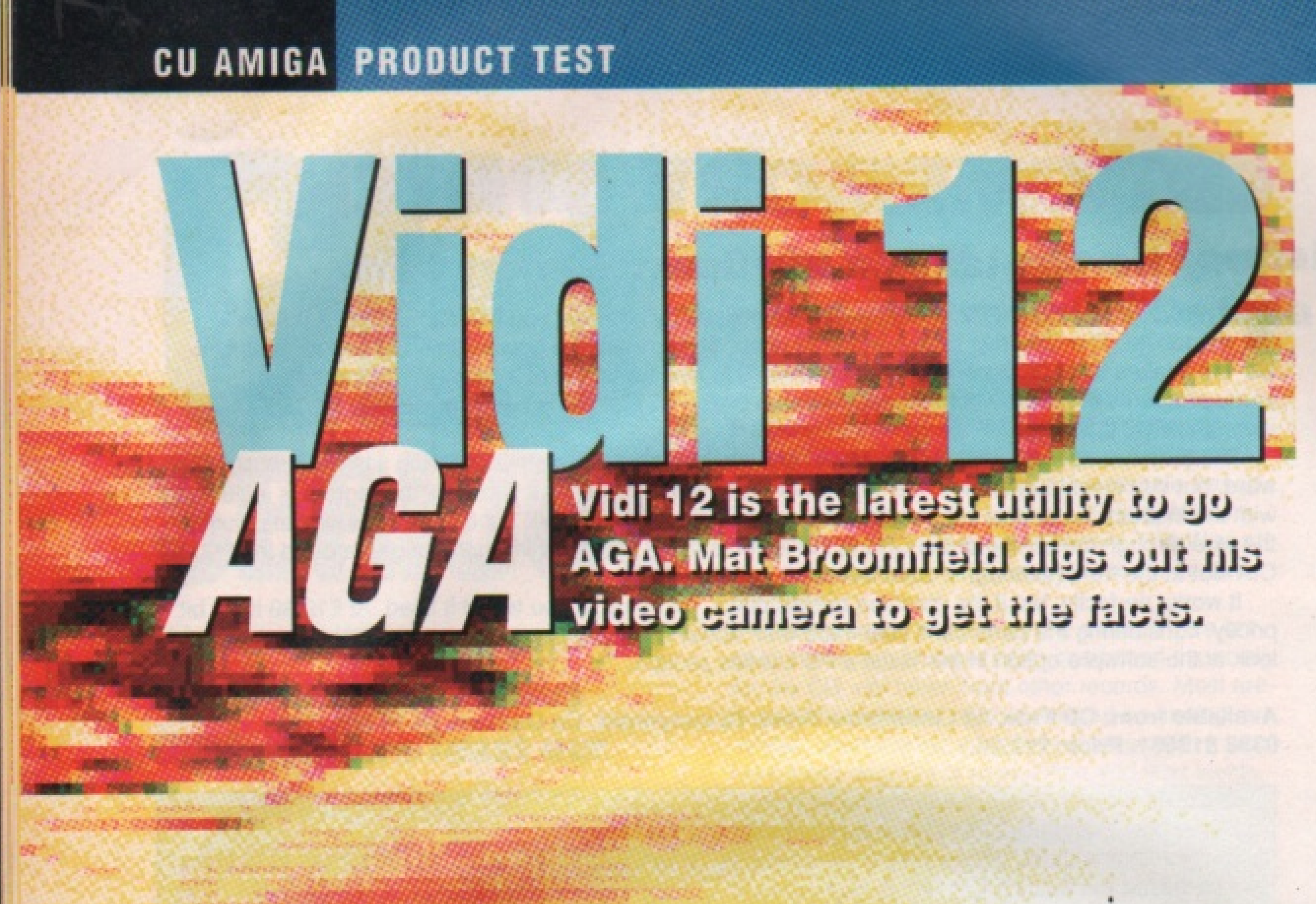
Whether you want to wind down after a night out, get yourself in the mood for a boogie, or if you've just had enough of News at Ten, Cyberdream is the answer. It's a 20-minute video of colour-cycling fractals, kaleidoscopic warps, abstract animations and 3D spinny things (stop me if I'm getting too technical). My personal favourite is the psychedelic rainbow-coloured shark. The backing is a well-suited mix of what many would call progressive house, but that reminds me of those awful progressive rock bands of the 70s, so we'll call it trance instead. In other words, wooshy synths, blobby basses and simple melodies over grooving house beats – most satisfactory.

The sound and graphics combine really well, and you don't have to be consciously watching or listening to get the benefit. Think of it as you would an EP or an album, or even as a moving painting. Then again, maybe you should think of it as a freaky video.All the graphics were done with an Amiga which, in a way, makes it even more impressive. See this month's Lead Feature for more info on the creators. At the price it's a steal, and deserves a place in every space-head's video collection.

Available from: Deep Evolution, White Hart House, Long Street, Atherstone, Warks CV9 1AX. Tel: 0827 713458. Price: £5.99.







Vidi 12 AGA

Vidi 12 is the latest utility to go AGA. Mat Broomfield digs out his video camera to get the facts.

All it takes to take images such as this is a home video camera and an eye for an interesting shot.

CU AMIGA TOP RATED

At only £99, Vidi 12 was already the best value digitiser in town, but have Rombo scored a knock-out blow over their rivals by incorporating full AGA support, and fully re-written software? The answer is a resounding probably.

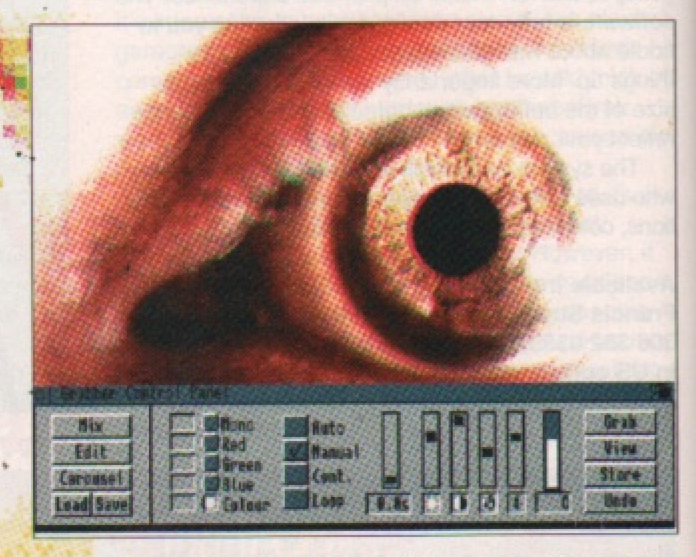
The Vidi 12 hardware incorporates a combined video digitiser and colour splitter in a small plastic box that plugs into the parallel port. The unit can accept composite video and S-VHS inputs so you can attach it to a wide variety of household video recorders and camcorders.

HEART OF THE MATTER

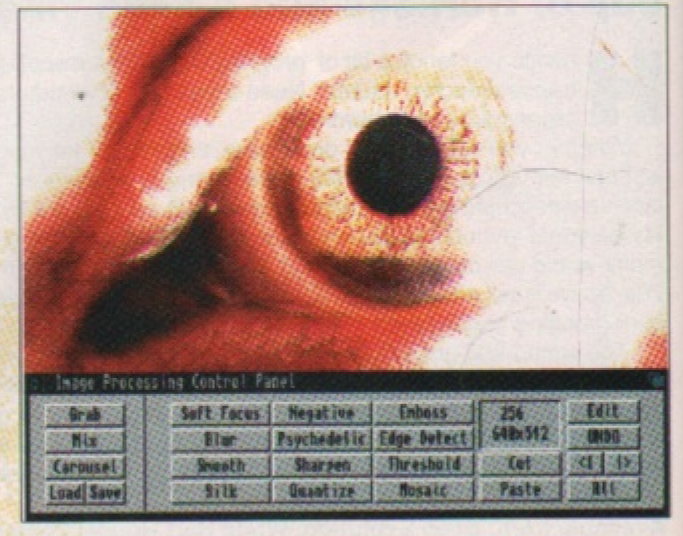
The heart of the package, however, is its software rather than its hardware, and this has undergone constant improvement since it was first released last year. The software comprises three main sections: Preferences, Image Control and File Management.

Preferences allows you to specify both the way an image is captured, and the way that it's displayed on the screen. Whenever you capture a colour image, the incoming video signal is separated into its three colour components; red, green and blue, and an individual image is captured for each of these. It's only when it comes to displaying the image that the three are combined.

Vidi 12 is capable of differentiating between 16 shades of brightness, which means that it can create a maximum of 4096 colours on-screen. This means that although the digitiser can generate screens that use the higher pixel resolutions of the



The grab control screen from where you may capture a single image or a sequence of images. Even time lapse digitising is supported.



The edit menu from where you can perform 12 different image processes on your captured screen.



Vidi 12 is equally at home digitising from a video recorder...



... or a video camera.

AGA Amigas, it isn't capable of working to the same degree of colour precision – it can only utilise a 12-bit palette whereas the A1200 and 4000 use a 24-bit one.

QUALITY

This is not actually as bad as it sounds. In the first place, the higher screen resolutions ensure that even in 256 colour mode, image quality is excellent. In HAM-8 mode I defy anyone to tell the difference between a 12-bit Vidi grab and pseudo 24-bit standard HAM-8 image, at least without magnifying a screen an examining its palette.

Regardless of the screen mode you decide to use, a single frame can be captured in less than a second, and grey scale ones can be grabbed in real-time. Once an image has been grabbed, it then needs to be mixed for display, and this can take well over a minute, even allowing for the A1200's faster processor.

When you're happy with the captured image, simply click Store and it will be placed into memory for you to edit or save later.

NEW FEATURES

One new feature of the program that I think is exceptional, is its time lapse option. Using this, the program will automatically grab an image at user-defined intervals between half a second and six hours; ideal if you want to digitise the growth of a plant, or the movement of clouds! This was possible before, but only through a complicated process of creating scripts yourself – having it integrated into the software is a much better solution.

The program also features a remote trigger option whereby you can activate the automatic capture of an image using a joystick plugged into port 2. Obviously you could expand on this idea by connecting up any switch to your joystick port allowing you to use Vidi as a security device amongst other things.

Unfortunately, the usefulness of these options is restricted by the fact that the grabbed images must be stored in RAM. On an A1200, digitising in full overscan in HAM-8 mode, there's only room in memory for a single frame. It might have been better if the program contained an option to store an image directly on disk without having to use RAM as a staging post first.

GRABBING

The difference between digitisers like the age old favourite Digi-View, and grabbers like Vidi is speed. Vidi is a frame grabber, which means it takes an individual frame from a moving video image.

The process of digitising an image with an older device such as DigiView took around 20 or 30 seconds, so grabbing off the TV etc. wasn't really an option.

The quality of grabbers has improved dramatically in the last few years and ordinary digitisers are more or less a thing of the past.

EDITING

Another important part of the program is its Editing suite. This contains 12 image processing options such as negative, blur, quantize and psychedelic which can be used to alter a single image, or an entire sequence of them. These options remain the same as those found in previous versions of the program, although they have been drastically speeded up, and a new option (Mosaic) has been added. Whereas previously these options could only be applied to HAM mode images, they can now be applied to any screen format, including screens loaded from disk.

If you have digitised more than one image, you can use the carousel to animate them. The carousel can also be used to specify the format in which images should be saved. Surprisingly, there's even a new 12 and 24-bit screen save option. The latter really is a bit redundant given the program's maximum 12-bit resolution.

I'm glad to see that Rombo are finally including a comprehensive and easy to follow manual with Vidi 12 because this was one of the program's shortfalls previously.

Vidi 12 doesn't take full use of the A1200 or A4000's 24-bit palette and this is a pity. However, you shouldn't let this detract from its incredible value. For only £99 it provides a full colour digitising system which is compatible with all Amigas and all screen modes. My opinion was very high the first time I saw it, now it's even higher. CU

JARGON BUSTERS

- **AGA – Advanced Graphics Architecture – The new graphics abilities of the A1200 and A4000.**
- **Colour Splitter – On a computer screen any colour can be created by mixing varying amounts of red, green and blue light. To find out the proportion of each primary in any given colour, the colour must first be separated into its three primary components using a colour splitter.**
- **Digitiser – A device that converts images taken from a video camera or player into Amiga screens.**
- **HAM-8 – Special AGA screen mode that permits the use of up to 256,000 colours on-screen at a time.**

ALTERNATIVE BUYS

The favoured digitiser at CU Towers is still the amazing V-Lab from the German company, MacroSystem. V-Lab works in a completely different way to Vidi, by digitising the entire composite signal and then decoding the resulting information to form a picture. Although it doesn't yet directly support AGA graphics, it does digitize to the maximum colour resolution of the PAL colour signal, which is pseudo 18-bit, and will save files in the standard 24-bit IFF standard.

V-Lab currently comes in two versions, V-Lab Par, which will work with any Amiga, and the faster, original V-Lab, which comes as a Zorro card. New versions are being released with even more impressive specifications, but you should expect to pay at least £200 more for these. A recent release is the Y/C version which will accept component signals such as those produced by SVHS videos and cameras – expect a review very soon.

For more information on V-Lab hardware contact Amiga Centre Scotland on 089 687 583.

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Everything is clearly explained in the manual with step by step instructions for novices.

VALUE FOR MONEY ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦95%
A 12-bit digitiser for under £100 – great value!

EFFECTIVENESS ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦85%
Image quality is very good, but not perfect.

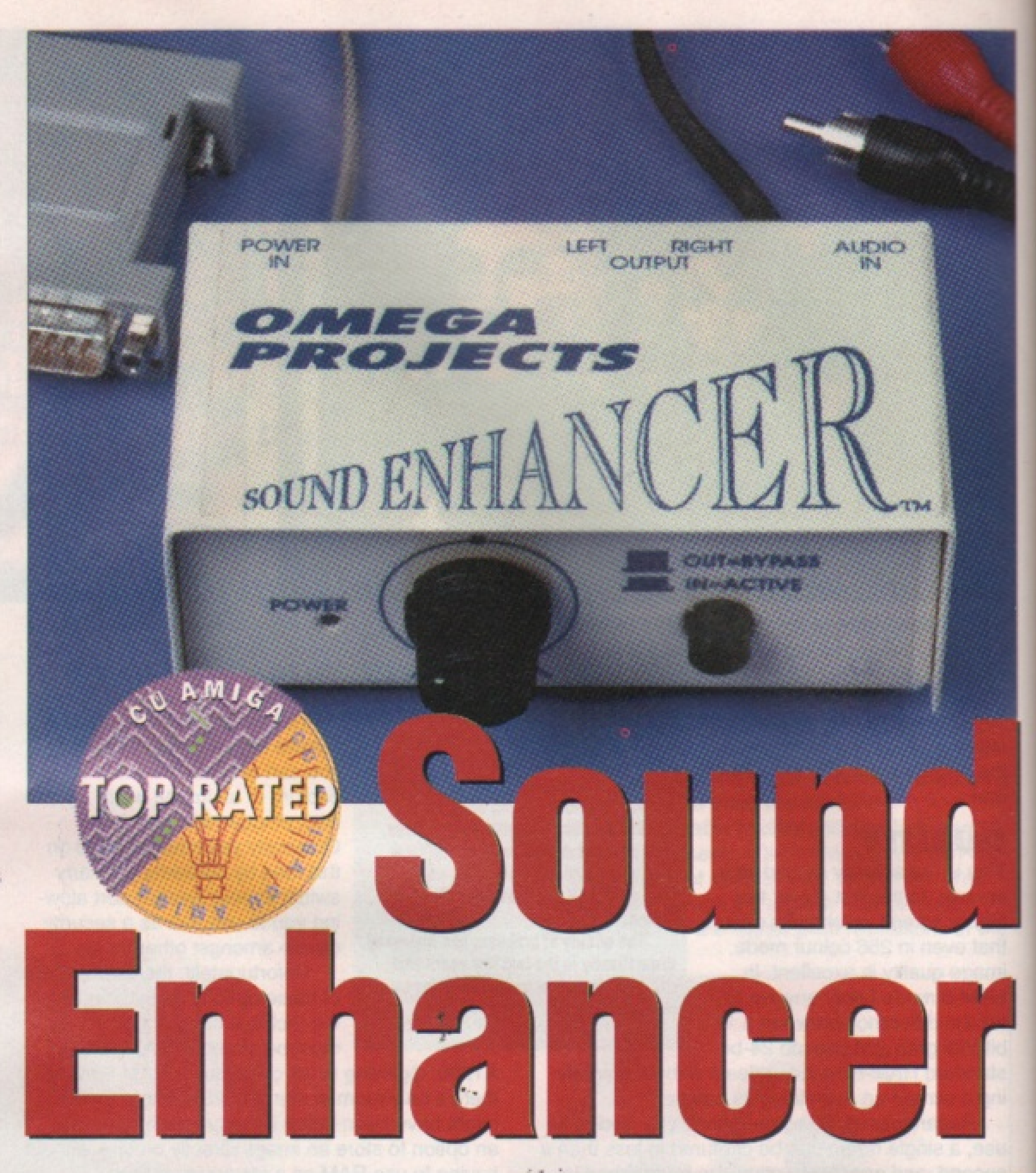
FLEXIBILITY ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦85%
Does everything you could want and then some.

INNOVATION ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦90%
Software updated to actively support AGA chipset.

"This package is great fun to use. Anyone need a slide-show making?!"

OVERALL 90%

Flatulant bottom end? A bit fuzzy up top? Dr Tony Horgan takes a look at a miracle cure.



Sound Enhancer

If you ask me, designing the Amiga's sound hardware was the best thing Commodore have ever done. The 8-bit resolution is out-dated these days, but it's still capable of producing some killer tunes. The trouble is, in theory, the output should be better than it actually is.

If you've ever sampled a loop and played it back to back with the original, you'll almost certainly notice a drop in the top-end frequencies, no matter how well you've recorded it. According to the laws of logic, if you sample at or above the Nyquist rate, all the high frequencies should come through in your recording. Even though this is usually the case, when it comes to playback, some of the higher frequencies are suppressed.

SOLUTIONS

One way around the problem is to use software to boost the treble. This works well with some samples, but if your sound has been recorded with an optimum signal-to-noise ratio, the treble could distort when it's amplified. Another alternative is to tweak the controls on your graphic equaliser, but many EQs don't provide sufficient levels of cut and boost to make much difference.

The new Sound Enhancer from Omega Projects is what you need. The original Enhancer was a basic treble booster, but the improved version is more impressive. Don't be deceived by its modest appearance – the difference it makes is stunning – you get a far brighter sound, with added wellie at the bass end. On top of that, the EQ also brings out various other frequencies that are usually lost.

BASICS

The only controls on the unit are a knob and a switch. The switch turns the Enhancer effect on and off, while the knob controls the amount of treble boost, so you can alter it to suit your particular hi-fi setup. You can't adjust the level of bass boost, but you can easily strike a good overall balance by tweaking the treble knob and the volume on your hi-fi.

If your samples are grainy in the first place, the Enhancer will make them sound worse. For example, drum loops recorded below about 16KHz will sound scratchy, and background noise will become more apparent on quiet samples. The treble boost is centred around the 20KHz range, and any frequencies of that pitch in a 16KHz sample will be distorted. The Sound Enhancer will just emphasise them. On the other hand, decent samples take on a new dimension. Play a sample with the Enhancer switched out, then switch it in, and and the sound leaps right out of the speakers at you! It's like the difference between a mono cassette tape, and a surround sound CD (although of course it's not CD quality).

If you've ever tried to record your music to analogue tape, you'll know what a struggle it is to get your recording to sound anything like the original. Most Amigas have a low-rated output that only registers about -5dB. If you put that straight onto tape (via your hi-fi's CD inputs for example), you'll have a very poor signal-to-noise ratio, and you'll end up with a bad recording as a consequence. Passed through the Sound Enhancer, the level is boosted to about +3dB, which is just about the highest level a cassette can take before distorting. With a higher volume level on the tape, there's not so much room for all that horrible hiss and hum to creep in. Not only will the overall level be right, but you'll also have control over the treble (treble response varies a great deal depending on the type of cassette, tape deck and noise reduction you're using).

CONCLUSION

In short, anything you record from the Amiga will sound much better if it's gone through the Sound Enhancer first. Even if the sample rates are low, you can still benefit from the extra meat of the bass boost, and keep the treble control turned down. Also, don't forget that this doesn't have to replace any existing equalisers you might have. There's no reason why you can't put your sound through as many EQs as you can like in order to hone your music to perfection. CU

JARGON BUSTERS

- NYQUIST RATE – The rate at which a sound must be recorded in order to capture the highest frequencies of the original. This rate is twice the frequency of the highest pitch in the sound.
- EQ – Short for equalisation; the adjustment of relative frequencies within a sound.
- SIGNAL-TO-NOISE RATIO – The level of recorded sound relative to the background noise. Higher ratios give superior reproductions.
- dB – Decibels, the accepted standard for measuring volume levels.



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EASE OF USE 95%
Can you turn a knob? Then you can work this!

VALUE FOR MONEY 84%
There's no cheaper alternative.

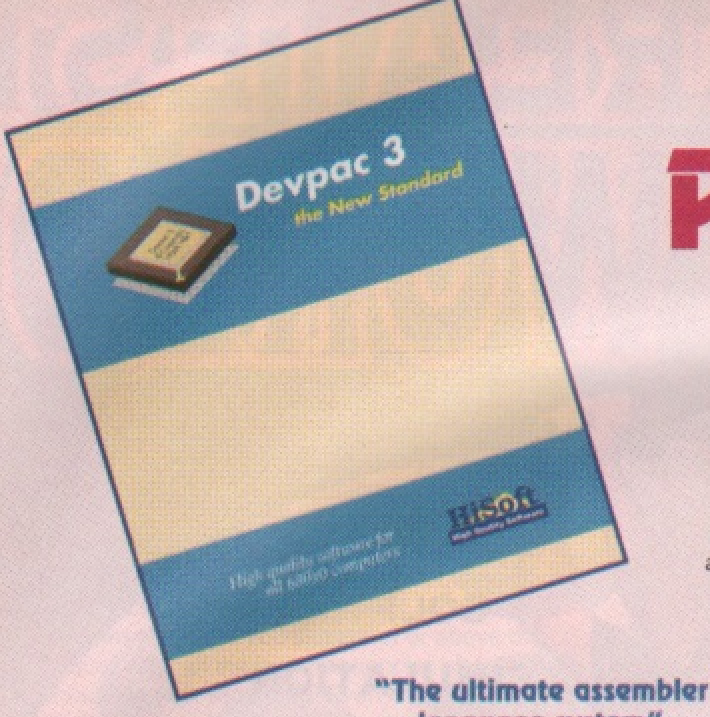
EFFECTIVENESS 92%
Drastically improves the treble and bass content, and amplifies the overall signal.

FLEXIBILITY 80%
The adjustable treble control lets you tweak the sound to suit your equipment.

INNOVATION 78%
Based on the original Sound Enhancer, but with improved bass output.

"The easiest and most effective way to improve your Amiga's sound."

OVERALL 90%



Calling all Programmers

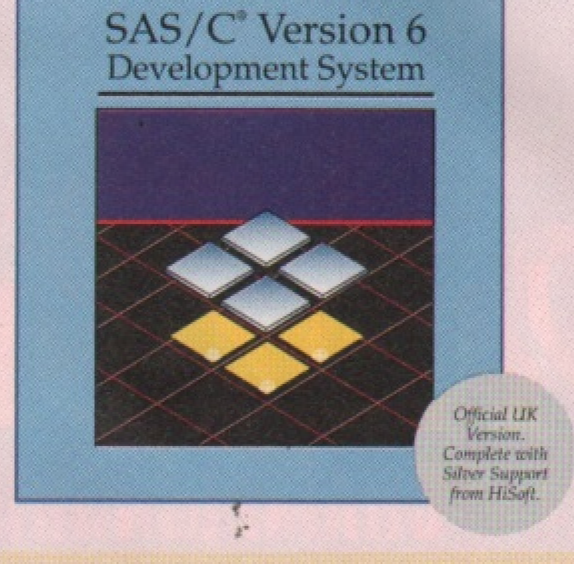
As a reader of Amiga Computing, you will already own one of our major products for the Amiga - assuming you saved the cover disk from the February issue. Now you can buy the complete manual for HiSoft BASIC 1.05, together with the full disk set (including an extended 1Mb compiler/editor and many examples) for only £19.95 plus P&P - just use the order form on the right. We also have all the official Commodore 3rd Edition ROM Kernel manuals in stock including Libraries, Devices, Hardware and Includes & Autodocs. In addition we have the excellent *Mastering Amiga Assembler* book which is free (honestly!) only when you buy Devpac 3 using the coupon in this ad. See the order form for some other special offers ...

"The ultimate assembler language system"

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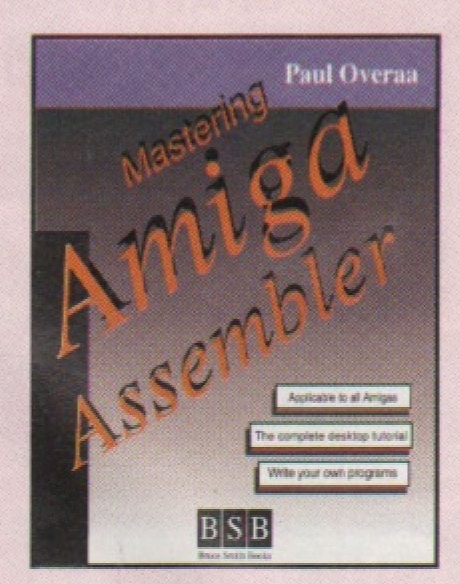
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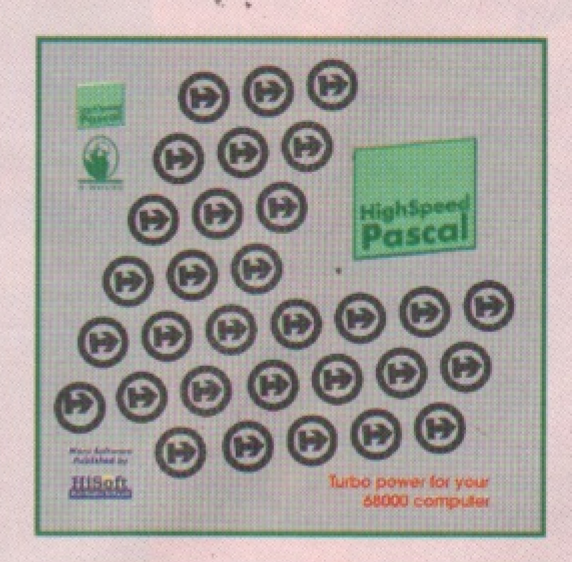
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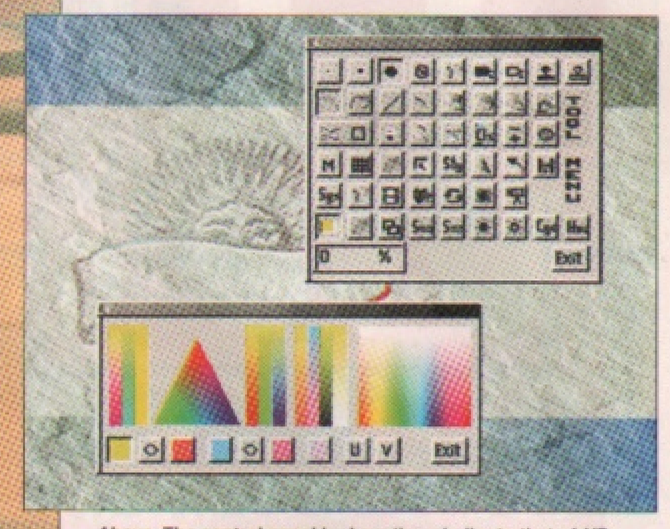
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Will truecolour modes on the Amiga be enhanced by a new wave of art packages? Nick Veitch looks at one.

TruePaint

Left: *Truepaint* will interface directly with *V-Lab*, the popularly acclaimed digitiser from MacroSystem.



Above: The control panel looks rather similar to that of *VD Paint*. There is a very good reason for this...

The race is on to produce a paint package capable of doing justice to the AGA Amigas. Yes, there is a special version on *DPaint*, and there is *Personal Paint*, but both of these suffer from similar drawbacks. Although they support the new screen and colour modes, the results still fall short of photographic quality.

It isn't a great feat to compose an image in HAM8 mode. What is difficult is keeping it looking good. Normally any HAM8 images you see on the AGA machines in demos and the like have been converted down from a 24-bit file. When you start mucking around with the picture, it starts looking tatty because all the effects, such as antialiasing, are taking place in eight bitplanes. The reason that images processed in packages like *ADPro* look much better, is because they operate on 24-bit data. Even if some of that information is lost when it is converted down, you started out with better ingredients.

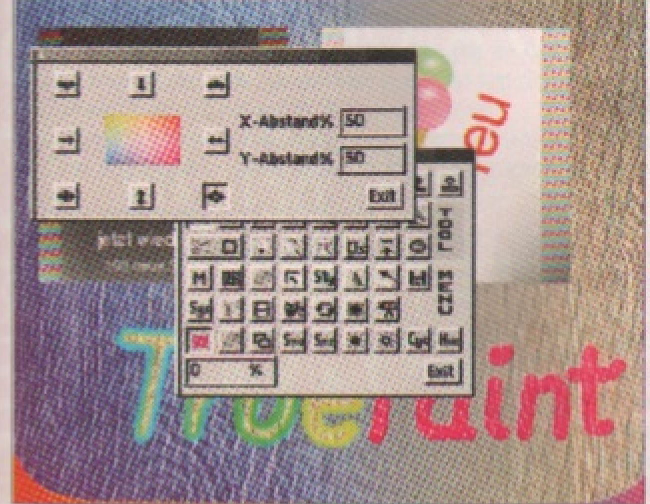
WIP

There is a speed loss involved in dealing with 24-bit graphics – but it is not all that different to the amount of processing time required for HAM8 images.

On running the software, a requestor will ask which screen mode to run in. Memory permitting, a speed-up buffer will be initialised at this stage. The resolutions provided include the overscan range, so *TruePaint* could be used for real-time genlocking, even in AGA mode. Image size is up to 16368 by 16368 pixels, although obviously you can't display all these on screen at once.

The interface for the program will be familiar to anyone who read the exclusive Retina review we ran in our April issue. Essentially the program is the same as the bundled *VDPaint* software, except it runs through Workbench instead of directly onto a 24-bit card. The only major difference is that the display updates are marginally slower, mainly because the Retina had its own exceptionally fast memory and the standard Amiga doesn't.

Obviously though, the fact that it is not running on a pure 24-bit board makes some difference to some of the features.



The most impressive feature of TruePaint has to be the very effective palette options.

TOOLS

Instead of the tool bar associated with most paint packages (*DPaint*, *Photon Paint*, *Personal Paint* etc.), *TruePaint* has a tool panel, which pops up in the middle of the screen whenever the menu button is pressed. All actions, including file handling, preferences and exiting the software are handled from this panel. This may not conform rigorously, or indeed at all, to the Commodore Style Guide, but perhaps in this instance it is excusable.

The most impressive features of *TruePaint* are immediately obvious when you've had a bit of a fiddle. Perhaps the most astounding feature is the Airbrush which actually behaves like an airbrush. The spray from the nozzle can be edited in a value-profile selection.

The tools and features all behave in a composite hierarchical structure. If you select the airbrush and the circle tool, you will draw circles with an airbrush and so on. Transparency curves can also apply to brushes, which is very handy for overlay effects.

There are an impressive number of palette editing and cycling tools, giving you full control over the extended colour ranges available to the machine. What's more they are handled in a readily accessible manner which will be familiar to artists on many professional graphics systems.

Support for JPEG and full ARexx support means that this paint package is well set to take on the future. JPEG is *de rigeur* for the larger than average files created by AGA images. The Unix PPM variant is also supported for some obscure reason.

CONCLUSION

Judging by this demo, this is the most impressively featured AGA paint package yet, although the interface may not be quite as easy to use as the likes of *DPaint*. Nevertheless, given the remarkable airbrush tool, font support and multiple undo facilities, it may be that for presentation Desktop graphics, *TruePaint* will take off in a big way. It does require a lot of resources to get going though. The basic setup would be an AGA machine with 2Mb of graphics memory and WB3.0 or above – in other words an A1200 – but only just. You will soon find that 4Mb is a more reasonable amount of memory and that a hard drive is a bit of a necessity.

Watch out for a review soon. 

JARGON BUSTERS

- JPEG – Joint Photographic Experts Group, a standard file format which stores photographic images at incredible compression rates. Works best on natural images – ones with gradual changes in shades.
- UNIX – a common mainframe operating system, which has given mankind the 'grep' command and the 'vi' editor. What would we do without them?
- AGA – Advanced Graphic Architecture. The new custom chipset, currently installed in the A1200 and A4000 machines.

CONTACT bsc Büroautomation AG, Lerchenstraße 5/11, 8000 München 50, Germany Tel: 01049 89 357 1300.



Left: Games are used to make the lessons less painful. *Below:* A detailed briefing precedes each lesson.

Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing II

Nick Veitch attempts to find out whether ten fingers are better than two.

There are some supreme achievements that have marked man's progress through the swirls of history: the development of language, the construction of the Great Pyramid, powered flight, rockets landing on the moon and RSA standard typing. You may prioritise these in some other way, but for me the ability to knock out over 100 words a minute on a keyboard is akin to climbing Everest. Apparently though, it is not a prime requisite to sell your soul to the devil. It seems that ordinary people can achieve this Herculean feat without resort to pentagrams and incense. All you need is a bit of training.

ENTER MAVIS

Mavis Beacon is well known, we understand, for her amazing typing ability. Well, maybe she is, but at CU Towers we only remember her from the original *Mavis Beacon* program. Anyway, this is a structured typing tutorial, designed by an expert.

The approach is quite entertaining. There are several modules to work through and you may start at one of three skill levels. Firstly there is a section which simply tests you on your speed. Text appears on the screen which you have to follow. In order to give you a bit of a hand there is a set of ghost hands which appears over a keyboard in the bottom half of the window. At the end of about 100 words of text you are given a breakdown of your performance.

As well as a pure speed in words per minute there is also an accuracy test which gives an effective WPM with deductions for the errors. These lessons will introduce new combinations of letters to drive the user forward in terms of flexibility. At the novice level these sessions will be the ones which introduce new characters.

If a mistake is made in this mode it should be corrected. Mistakes are allowed to stand, but if you make an error with a space it can throw out the whole rest of the sentence being typed. Other training modes will simply not accept incorrect keystrokes (but they will tot them up and use them against you when the session is over).

GAMES

There are two games in the software which provide a fun aspect to learning. In the typing tutor you get to race a car. In order to keep in front you must type in the words which scroll across the sky in front of you.

The opponent's car will go at a steady speed but you will often find your own vehicle surging ahead and suddenly dying as you come across familiar words and phrases. Mistakes will cause some rather grotesque smearing experiences involving the windscreen and a member of the local insect population.

The keypad game is a little harder. Items roll along a simulated checkout till towards a shopping bag. As they pass over the scanner a price will flash up which has to be entered before the cabbage or whatever continues its journey. Unfortunately, even in complete novice mode, the length of time allowed is very small. This game isn't quite as exciting.

Left: You can practice number skills as well as words.

CONCLUSION

Mavis attempts to make the lessons interesting by varying the text and interspersing the new material with fun games. The games themselves are a bit primitive, but it is a change from just repetitive typing exercises. Each of the different styles of lesson incorporates all the classic devices of typing courses so there is no doubt as to the academic credentials of this package.

As with all training software though, it is only effective if the user really wants to learn. *Mavis Beacon* may be significantly more interesting than more traditional education packages, but it still doesn't beat a game of *Sensible Soccer*. It does look a bit too much like a PC port, but then the PC version is £70 more expensive, so maybe you should count yourself lucky. CU

MINDSCAPE £29.99

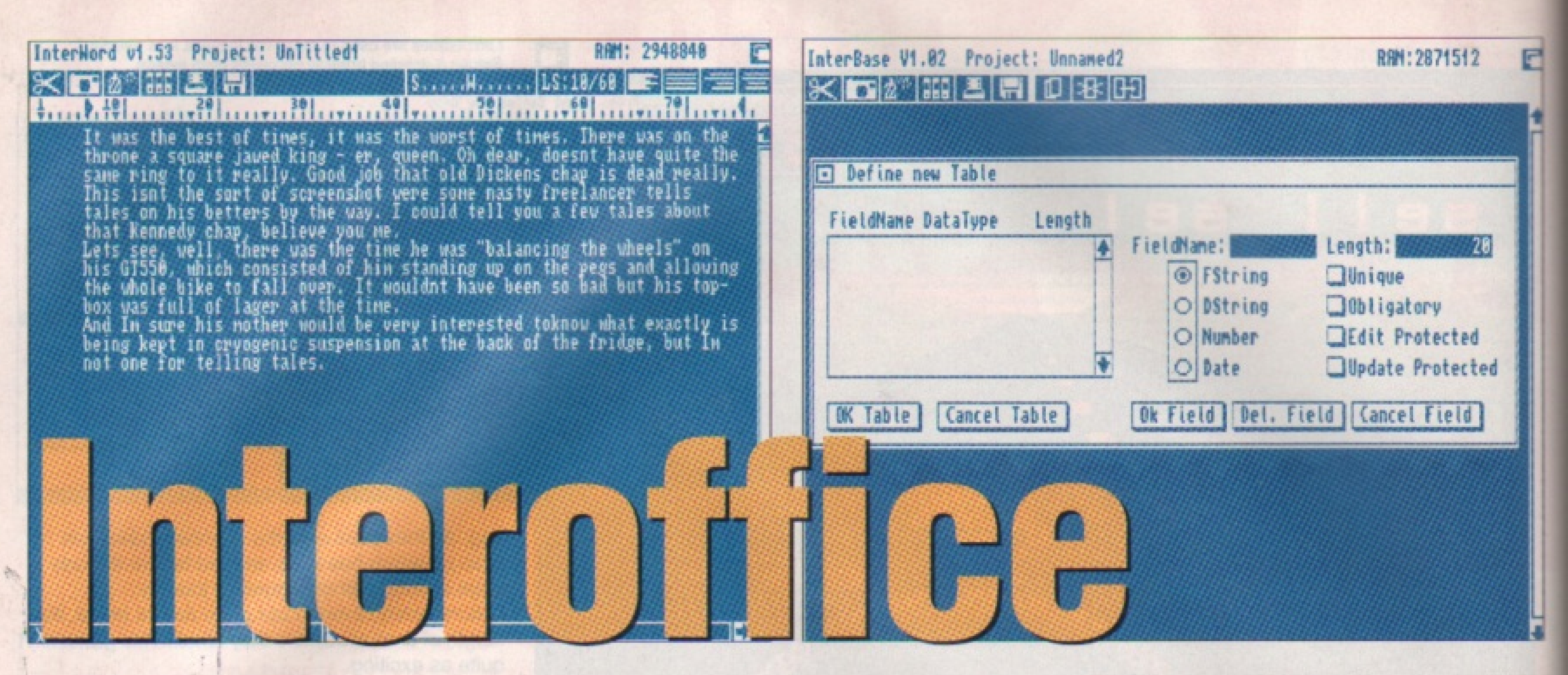


Mindscape International, Priority House, Charles Ave., Maltings Park, Burgess Hill, Sussex RH15 9PQ TEL: 0444 246333

EASE OF USE	88%
Very easy to use, you just have to be able to type.	
VALUE FOR MONEY	90%
Not a bad price for educational software which obviously spent some time in development.	
EFFECTIVENESS	86%
Seems to have produced some sort of improvements in our test sample.	
FLEXIBILITY	74%
The structure is a little rigid, but you can break it up with games.	
INNOVATION	71%
Not a ground-breaking product. Looks a bit too much like the PC version.	

"Mavis Beacon is without a doubt the best typing tutor available for the Amiga."

OVERALL 82%



Interoffice

If the phrase '3-in-1' makes you think of light machine oil, perhaps you'd better take a look at Interactivision's compilation. Nick Veitch did.

The idea of an integrated software package probably started with *Microsoft Works* on the IBM PC. The idea is a terribly simple one. If you want to increase efficiency and productivity, all your software should be similar and work in similar ways, using the same shortcuts for functions which are common to all applications and so on.

Microsoft developed the idea further to ease the transfer of data between two applications. In this sense *InterOffice* is not, strictly speaking, an integrated package. There are three separate utilities, which can co-operate in some cases, but which don't share any common data area.

It does not compete directly with the likes of *Gold Disk Office* or *MiniOffice* in terms of the portability of data, and it is much easier to consider it as a bumper pack of three separate applications.

THE WORD

Probably the most common computer application known to man, the word processor, is also most likely to be the application users spend the majority of their time looking at. It is important then, that the controls should be easy to use and the display pleasant to look at.

The menu options include some features missing on far more expensive pieces of software. The shortcuts are all on fairly sensible keys, although the Mac standard of X, C & V has been used for cut and paste operations.

Multiple documents are supported, rather in the same way that *Protext* supports them, in that they do not appear as separate windows, but you can page between them or have a 'top and bottom' display. Interword is one of those text processors which likes to orientate towards how it will look when output. It is a What You See Is Almost What You Get package, because it does show indents, bold and italic text, headers, etc. but only makes provision for raw text – there's none of that fooling around with different fonts.

THE BASE

A database is important to any business but good ones are rare on the Amiga. This is really the acid test for any integrated Amiga package.

Interbase refers to a database of objects as a table, each table consisting of a number of different fields. All the fields must be entered before any actual information is added. The fields can be of many different types to cater for numeric, alphanumeric and date/time data. It is also possible to select various error trapping options at this stage.

Entering the data is just a matter of typing it in on screen. This can be a time consuming task and is not really helped by having to keep selecting 'add a new record' every time. Most database programs these days have an automatic entry system, meaning you can just type away until you run out of things to enter.

The facilities offered are, like the word-pro, fairly advanced, but the major let-down is the display, which is very unattractive and quite confusing. All the data is simply listed with one record following after another.

THE SPREAD

The spreadsheet is the star of this collection. It may be as visually deficient as the other programs, but the features more than make up for this. Unlike many newer and ostensibly more professional packages, Interspread can handle as many rows and columns as you like. Many Amiga spreadsheets will only allow around a hundred columns of data, which is insufficient for those who like to use their spreadsheets as inventory records or similar applications.

There is a reasonable set of formulae available, and the ability to program in macros for specific repetitive tasks. Information can be block copied around the worksheet and exported directly to the word-pro, which makes compiling reports easier.

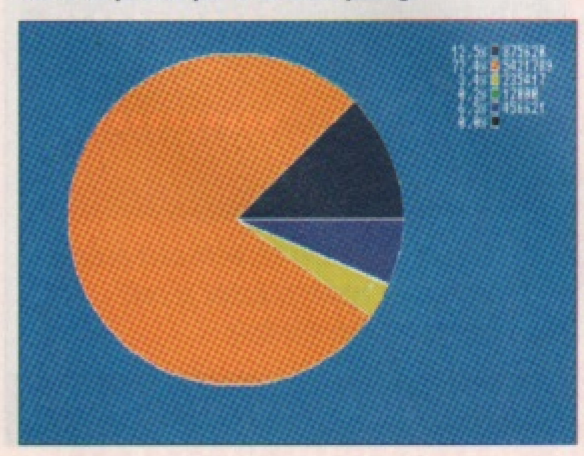
The graph drawing facilities support eight different types of chart, which are all displayed on a seperate screen in up to eight colours. The charts may be printed out directly or saved as IFF files. Essentially this module has a feature list similar to that of *Maxi-Plan* reviewed in February.

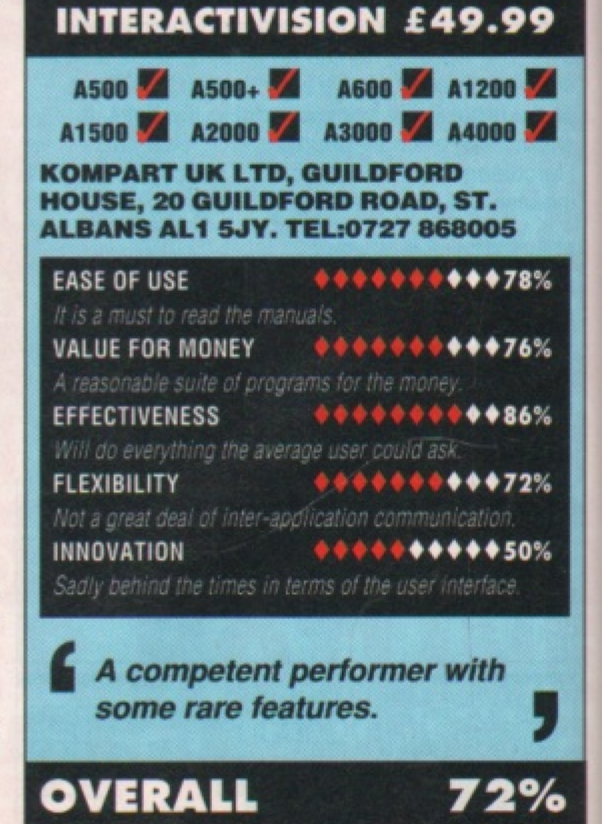
CONCLUSION

All the progams will run on 1.3 or better versions of Workbench, but this is no way justifies the rather old-style feel to the program. It was certainly designed with 1.3 in mind, with only a small range of screen options and a 4-colour limit. It would be a shame to run any of these programs on an AGA machine.

Having said that they all, in their individual way, have at least one useful feature not found anywhere else. CU

This is the prettiest part of the whole package.





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EASE OF USE	78%
It is a must to read the manuals.	
VALUE FOR MONEY	76%
A reasonable suite of programs for the money.	
EFFECTIVENESS	86%
Will do everything the average user could ask.	
FLEXIBILITY	72%
Not a great deal of inter-application communication.	
INNOVATION	50%
Sadly behind the times in terms of the user interface.	

A competent performer with some rare features.

OVERALL 72%

Educational

MICKEY'S ABC'S

INFOGRAMES £25.99 TEL: 071 738 8199



An apple a day keeps the doctor away, says Mickey, as he opens the door to reveal a fridge packed full of chocolate.

Learning to read can be a hard experience for children. After all, with 52 shapes to remember you need all the help you can get. *Mickey's ABC's* is designed to help pre-school children (2-5) recognise letters and sounds through an imaginative cartoon interface. The way it works is simple. There are two main scenes – Mickey's home and the local fair. For both scenes, there are 26 things for Mickey to do, including travel between the two, and each thing begins with a different letter. Typing a letter brings up a short animation of Mickey and friends acting out the action, along with verbal commentary of what they are doing.

Essentially, there are two ways to play *Mickey's ABC's*. The first is just to play around, hitting a key at random and watching what Mickey does. Perhaps not high on educational value, but it does help the child get used to the interface. Secondly, you can point something out to a child – an ice cream van for example – and see if they can get Mickey to eat some ice cream. Naturally the key to type is 'i', and getting the child to recognise this fact is a significant stage in the learning process.



Is Zucchini too advanced a word for the average two to five year old to cope with? Mickey doesn't seem to think so.

The presentation is superb. Full cartoon animation abounds, along with stacks and stacks of samples of both Mickey and other Disney characters, and a friendly female voice-over that explains what's happening. Type the letter T while Mickey is at home, and the voice will say 'T – as in Television', the word 'Television' is displayed on screen and Mickey will wander off to the sitting room and switch on the box.

My only real criticism of this otherwise excellent product is the loading times. Due to the massive amounts of sampling used, the program has to access the drive every time you do something, resulting in a slow moving game. This could lead to frustrating gameplay. After all, you and I know what's happening when the game freezes and the drive light comes on, but whose to say that a three year old does? Otherwise, a product that fulfils all it sets out to do.

86%

MICKEY'S 123'S

INFOGRAMES £25.99 TEL: 071 738 8199

There's a lot more to numbers than two plus two, and this is something that most educational packages tend to miss out. Sure, there are more than enough edutainment products dedicated to helping your children to count from one to a hundred and handle all sorts of operations on the figures between, but that's all. *Mickey's 123's* – subtitled *The Big Surprise Party* – takes basic numbers (0 to 9) and uses them as part of a semi-planning, semi-recognition operation.

The game tells of Mickey's plans to throw a surprise party for a random character. What you have to do is go to the toy factory, create a present for the intended surprisee, invite your guests and then buy the food and decorations. Travel around Mickey's small town is via the numeric keypad, with each destination numbered.

At the toy factory, basic number recognition is practised, with the child first

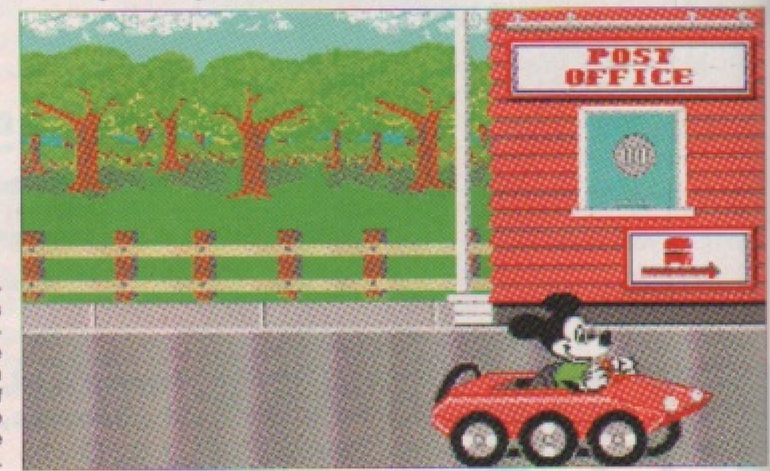


It's the man with the helium! Mickey makes sure that he stocks up to keep his characteristic voice in fine form.

selecting the toy they want to make from a menu of nine, and then using the number keys to perform all sorts of weird transformations on the conveyor belt. Then the invitations need to be sent out. Here the child can invite as many of the nine possible guests as they like, by selecting them from a numbered list. Finally, they have to go shopping, and this is where the planning comes into the game. Enough food needs to be bought to satisfy the guests, or the party will be a failure!

Again, the presentation is excellent. All of the characters are true to their cartoon counterparts, and clever use of samples make them even more recognisable. Once more, though, the loading times slow things down heavily. Unfortunately this game really relies on keeping up concentration, and with everything stopping and starting every few seconds, it might just make it too frustrating for the pre-school user. A good idea, but the design just isn't tight enough.

71%



The postman delivers your invitations the moment you post them. If only real life was the same.

software

Tony Dillon remembers with some fondness his days as a member of the Mickey Mouse Club. M-I-C, K-E-Y, M-O-U-S-E!

MICKEY'S JIGSAW PUZZLES

INFOGRAMES £25.99 TEL: 071 738 8199



Above: In silhouette mode only part of the picture is removed. Can you guess what this is going to be?

Left: One of the more difficult jigsaws. Not quite 1000 pieces, but then it is for five year olds!

Moving into the five and above age range comes *Mickey's Jigsaw Puzzles*, an exercise in shape recognition. As you have probably guessed from the title, this game allows you to assemble jigsaws on screen from 15 different pictures. Choose the image you want to break down, along with the number of pieces to break it into, and let the computer do the rest.

Mickey himself talks you through the entire process, offering help here and there and letting you know the result of any options you may have chosen. This is just another example of the work that has gone into making the child feel that Mickey is right there working with them, rather than letting the parent feel they have been conned into another tenuously licensed product.

From this point on, all you are left with is a drawing showing the shapes of the pieces, and the pieces themselves. You already know what a jigsaw is, so I don't need to explain what the player has to do. And...that's it? Yep, it seems to be. I must admit, it doesn't seem like a hell of a lot, especially when you consider that (a) the 15 pictures included are the only ones you can use (the program doesn't let you load in pictures of your own, which seems like a strange thing to omit) and (b) a very similar package is included as part of Europress' *Paint and Create*, rather than as a standalone product like this. To be fair, though, this does have a few excellent options.

Firstly, you can print out the pictures as a colouring book. Secondly, there are two jigsaw modes. The first is when the entire picture is broken up, like any other jigsaw. The second is when a section of the picture, such as Mickey himself is removed and broken up, and the player has to fit the pieces back into the original image.

Thirdly, the pictures can be animated once the jigsaw has been completed, giving the user an added goal to work toward. These are all solid plus points, but on the bottom line, I don't think that there is enough in this package to validate the price point.

70%

MICKEY'S MEMORY CHALLENGE

INFOGRAMES £25.99 TEL: 071 738 8199

This is a game that all of us have played at some point under one name or another – Pairs, Patience or any other title. If you haven't recognised it from the screenshots, then here's the gist. A set of cards are laid face down. The spread contains a set number of pairs and a couple of wild cards. Two players take turns to turn over two cards hoping to find two that match. If a pair is revealed, those two cards are removed from the board and the player turns over another two cards. If no pair is found, the cards are turned face down again and play hands over to the next player. The aim is to find more pairs than the other player by remembering the positions of previously revealed cards. Remember it now?



Now hang on, I know this. Let's see if I can work it out. I'm absolutely positive I saw that one in the top row somewhere...

That is *Mickey's Memory Challenge* in a nutshell. Obviously it goes a little further than that. You can play with five different sets of cards, ranging from Disney characters (easy) through cards with words written on them (slightly harder) up to cards where you have to match the word to the picture. On top of that, you can play solo, with a friend or against Goofy, Donald Duck or Mickey. Goofy hasn't much of a memory, so he's the easiest to beat, but you won't get much past Mickey.

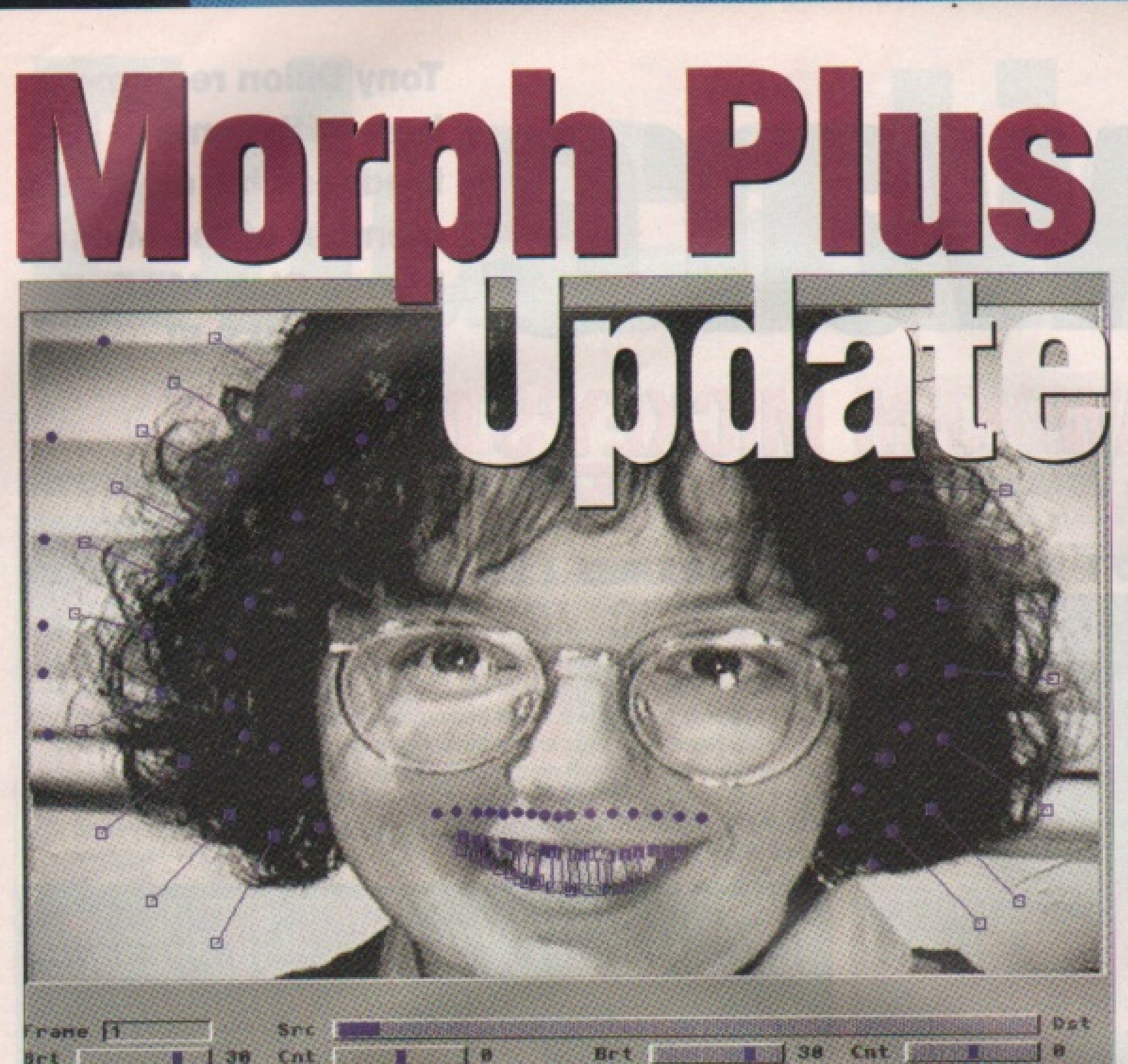


The menu screen uses easy to recognise icons to set up the next game.

So what does this game teach your child? Mainly, it improves memory skills, getting the child to remember the cards turned over so far. Initially, I couldn't see the difference between loading this and just laying out a set of playing cards, but the differences soon became apparent. Firstly, the voices of the characters involved are used to great effect, adding character to the game itself. Secondly, the cards used are much easier to remember than playing cards, making the game more interesting for the younger player. The only thing that lets the game down is the fact that the player can't enter their own name, only being referred to as Player 1 or Player 2. This is only a small criticism of an excellent game – it's a lot of fun to play and will certainly sharpen your child's memory.

83%

Morph Plus Update



CU AMIGA TOP RATED

John Kennedy watches as ASDG morphs its software into a new version right before his eyes.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX

Morph Plus comes with a suite of programs. First is *Morph Plus*, from where the images can be loaded, saved and adjusted. Then there is *Morph*, which morphs between the images. Finally there is *Fred*, the animation control program. With *Fred* you can preview animations and perform post-processing operations on them.



Photographic quality image manipulation is the name of the game with *MorphPlus*.

Morph Plus hails from the same people who brought us *Art Department*, a milestone in Amiga software.

Originally reviewed in the December 1992 issue of CU AMIGA, *Morph Plus* has undergone a few revisions. *MorphPlus* can be used in exactly the same way as *Art Department Professional (AdPro)* – it comes with the same loaders and savers and a very similar front end. What's different are the new operators, which include morphing facilities and some other very tasty special effects. If you already use *AdPro*, these operators can be used simply by installing them in *AdPro*'s directory.

MORPHING

Performing a fully-fledged supertransmorphification – whatever it's called, it's still an evolution of one image into another – requires another program (*Morph*) which runs concurrently with *MorphPlus* (or *AdPro*). It all sounds complicated but it's not – ARexx makes it an automatic process.

From this program, the images are viewed and control points and outlines created. For example, when you are morphing faces you will want the eyes to remain constant between images, so several control points should be tacked around them. Then click on a gadget or two and wait whilst the morphing takes place.

It's *Morph* which has seen the most useful improvements. Not only is it more stable (and has a better choice of menu colours), but the control screen has been upgraded to make use of any available AGA chipset. Now the images can be displayed in 256 shades of grey to provide far greater detail – the only drawback being the large amount of memory this consumes.

Another major *Morph* improvement is the ability to create an animation directly – previously this required all sorts of messing around with *MorphPlus* and *Fred*. Now it's controlled from a single requestor, which also offers some new dithering patterns designed specifically for use in animations. Dithering has to be used to obtain good colour representation using a limited palette. Traditional dithering techniques produce excellent results, but cause a flickering if used in an animation. A random dithering will provide more apparent colours, but with no flicker. For the less patient, *Morph* now has greater control over the quality of the rendered images.

The addendum to the manual also describes some more unusual uses for *Morph*, such as the ability to create moving mattes – special masks used in video and film work.

AGA

Other enhancements to the *MorphPlus* suite are really for the benefit of users of the New Generation Amigas – support for Mode Promotion as standard (no more DoubleX required), 256 grey levels in previews, VGA and SUPER72 rendering support – all features which prove that ASDG are bang up to date with Amiga support.

If you want these new features, you're going to have to pay for them in terms of hardware. On my Amiga 4000/030 the 256 colour screens were immediately out of the question until memory was updated to 6Mb. Even then, another 4Mb SIMM is needed before the Ripple operator will work with a 640 by 512 colour image. The moral is, if you intend to use *MorphPlus* to the best of its abilities you'll need to use some very expensive kit.

If you have the processing power and the memory, the world is your oyster. You don't need AGA to use the new features of *MorphPlus*, but it's a good excuse.

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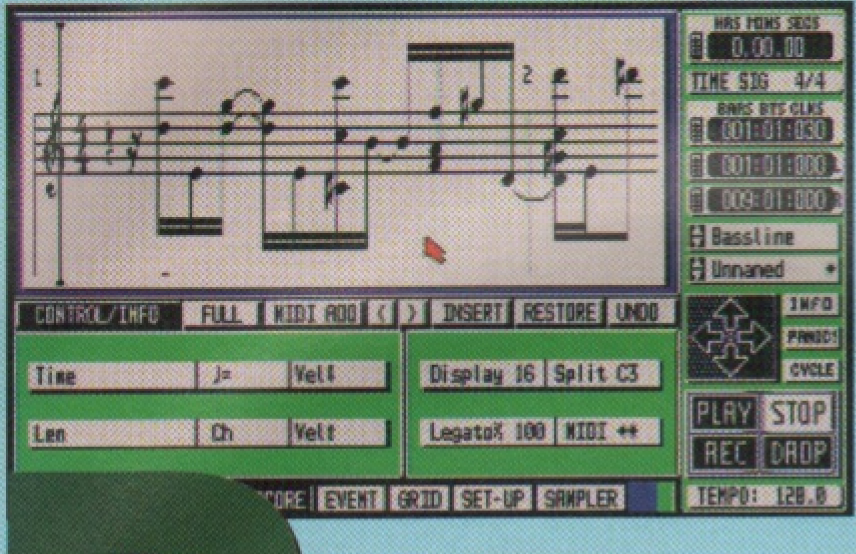
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Once you've recorded a track, you can use the event editor to make any fine adjustments.

Rave

Tony Horgan takes time out from modulating his 303 to have a tinker with a new budget sequencer.

Right: Musos can use the notation editor.

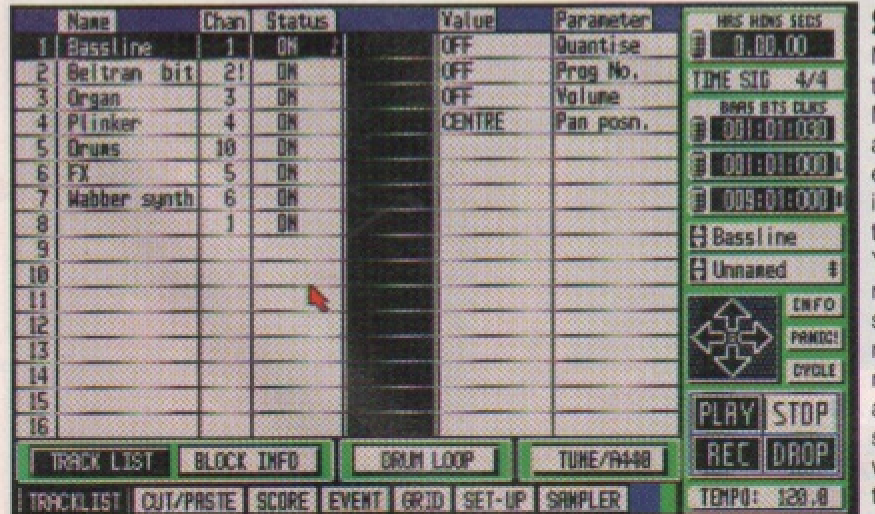
Oh no! We've printed the Atari ST screenshots by mistake! Actually, these are the Amiga shots, believe it or not. The curse of the ST-port is back from the grave to haunt us Amiga users, but is it necessarily such a bad thing? After all, until recently, the ST has been way out in front as far as MIDI sequencers go.

Rave isn't trying to beat *Bars and Pipes* or *KCS*. Not everyone wants a list of features that reads like a telephone directory. Why should you pay £300 for a piece of software when you know you're never going to use half of it? That's the thinking behind *Rave*, which at £50 is a good deal cheaper than any other MIDI sequencer currently in production (except for OctaMED, of course). The name suggests that it's designed with dance music in mind, and indeed that does seem to be the case. However, it's still set in many of the ways of the traditional sequencer.

THE CLANGERS

It drops a massive clanger for starters, with its sample support. Dance music is all about samples, and the Amiga has great sampling abilities, so you could reasonably expect to be able to use your sample library with *Rave*. Due to some appalling programming practices, *Rave* is only capable of playing one sample at a time. The manual gives an excuse about this being 'for reasons of speed', even though the Amiga is quite capable of handling multiple MIDI channels and four samples simultaneously. If you have IFF samples saved with loops, the program refuses to load them, with no further explanation than 'a disk or drive error has occurred'. IFFs without loops and RAW samples load okay.

A few well chosen samples are included with the program, along with some ageing Art of Noise instrument sounds. Unfortunately, the loops have dead sections of noise at the start, which causes them to run out of sync with any other sequenced music. These people are in the business of making music on computers – surely among their ranks they can find someone competent enough to sample a breakbeat?



The tracklist is where you set up all your instruments. You can give each instrument a track of its own and define its MIDI channel. Amiga samples are indicated by exclamation marks.

STEP IT UP

Maybe the MIDI side of things is a bit better, then? Most sequencers revolve around a piano roll graphic editor, but *Rave* opts instead for a simplified vertically-scrolling variation. You can use it to enter notes and drum patterns in step time, by drawing notes on the grid with the mouse. You can scroll up and down through the sequence with the four-way cluster of arrows on the right of the screen, or use the cursor keys. The irritatingly sluggish scrolling is further testament to its ST origins.

For precise editing of your sequences, there's the Event Editor. Once again, this is a vertically-scrolling window, but is completely text-orientated. Each 'event' in the sequence is listed in order from top to bottom. Every 'note on' has its own values for volume, velocity, aftertouch, pitchbend, modulation and pan. These can be altered from their original settings by clicking on the values, and entering new ones from the Amiga keyboard.

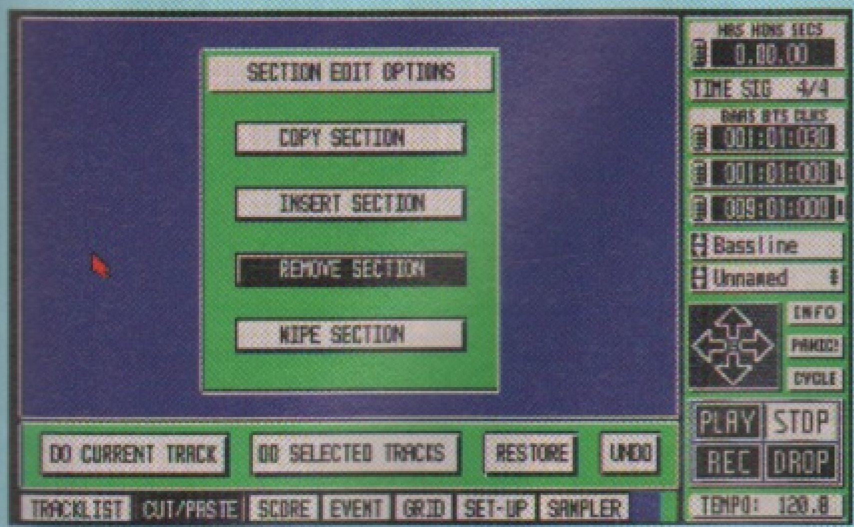
Another alternative is to use the notation screen. It's possible to perform edits from here, but you don't get the accuracy that's available from the event and step editors. There's also an option to output the score to an Epson-compatible printer.

LOOP DA LOOP

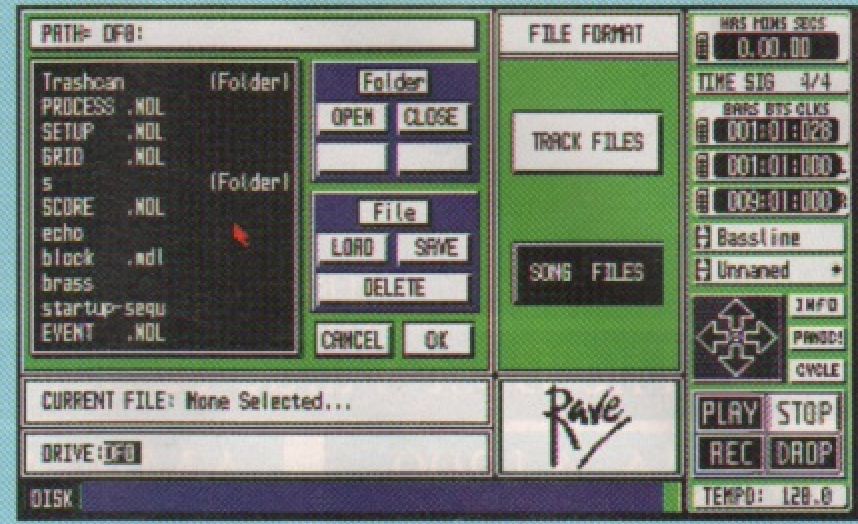
Recording tracks is pretty much as normal, but there are also two types of loop recording modes. One allows you to make endless takes of a user-

JARGON BUSTERS

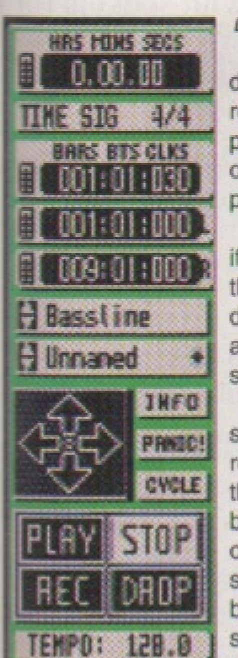
- IFF – Standard file format used for graphics and sound samples.
- RAW – Sound sample file format which doesn't accommodate loops and default playback rates.
- PIANO ROLL – Method of displaying music, which takes its name from the perforated paper rolls that held pianola music.
- OVERDUBBING – Adding new parts to previously recorded tracks or sequences.
- ST PORT – A program written for the Atari ST, slightly adjusted for Amiga compatibility.
- SOUNDTRACKER/MED – PD sequencers designed primarily for Amiga sample-based music, often for use in games and demos.



The cut and paste functions have their own separate screen.



Disk access is a painfully slow process, which freezes the system for a scarey few seconds.



Left: The main control panel.

defined loop, where the recorded data overwrites the previous pass each time. The other is designed for drum programming.

Each pass within the specified loop is overdubbed on the last, so you can build up drum tracks without continually stopping and starting the sequencer.

For example, you could set up a four bar loop, begin recording with the bassdrum, then after the fourth bar, the bassdrum pattern will repeat on its own, while you switched to the snare for four bars, then the high hats, and so on. If you like recording your drums live, rather than with the step editor, you should take to it before long.

USER-HOSTILE

On the subject of the general running of the program, it really is the most awkward piece of software I've used for a long time. There's not a pull-down menu in sight, and not even a whiff of any multi-tasking. The whole system is taken over completely. All the requestors are confusingly non-standard. For example, to load in a song file, you have to locate a completely unmarked, tiny green oblong, approximately 10x5mm in size (can you spot it?), and click on it with the right mouse button. Of course! How stupid of me! There's even worse to come.

Before you can access a disk, you're made to endure a frightening few seconds, in which the machine locks up, pointer and all, while the software puts the drives back into AmigaDos mode. It's at moments like these, when you've got a computer full of un-saved data, that you just hold your breath and wait for the machine to come back to life.

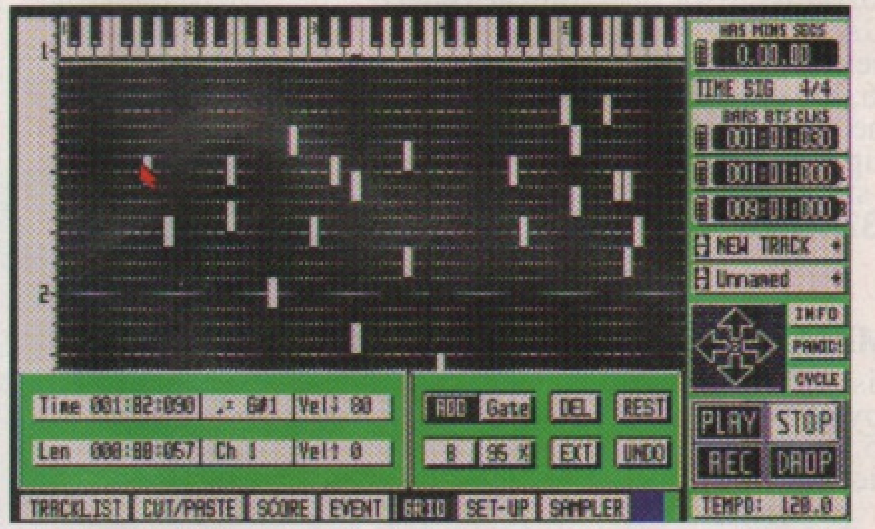
Because *Rave* takes over the whole system, you can't have a Workbench running in the background.

You might not think this is much of a problem, but if you run out of disk space half way through a session, there's no way you can format a new one! A format option as part of the DISK page would have solved the problem.

CONCLUSION

Strange interfaces aren't the end of the world. *Soundtracker* and *MED* both have non-standard front ends, but then they have the advantage of being very powerful. If *Rave* had a throbbing heart of power behind that ST-ported facade, then maybe the poor presentation could have been overlooked. Unfortunately, on the MIDI side, *Rave* is one of the most basic sequencers around, and the sample-support is hopeless.

If you're on a tight budget, there aren't many options open. Both *KCS* and *Bars and Pipes* are unrealistically priced for most of us. *Music X* is still available from a few distributors, often for under £30, and although it's looking rather dated these days, it's still a very capable package. If you've got heaps of patience, a MIDI instrument or two, no desire to use Amiga samples, and can scrape £50 together, then *Rave* would be worth a look. On the other hand, if you don't fancy grappling with a slow and unwieldy user-interface, or if you plan on integrating samples with MIDI sounds, you'll have to look elsewhere. CU

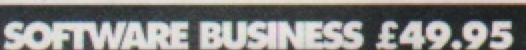


The step editor is the most user-friendly section, best used for drum programming. Unlike most sequencers, it scrolls from bottom to top, rather than left to right. For information on note velocities and other controllers, you'll need to consult the event editor or the tracklist.



One of *Rave*'s biggest failings is its inability to play more than one Amiga sample, even though the Amiga has specialised hardware to deal exclusively with sample-playback.

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EASE OF USE 38%
Awkward in the extreme, with a total absence of any Amiga-standard menus, windows or requestors.

VALUE FOR MONEY 54%
It's cheap, but it's also nasty.

EFFECTIVENESS 66%
Capable of sequencing a modest MIDI setup.

FLEXIBILITY 30%
Can only play one sample, and won't multi-task.

INNOVATION 15%
It's all been done long before, and done a lot better.

> *Awkward to use, this is badly let down by poor design and programming*

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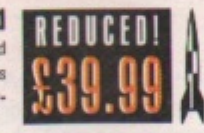
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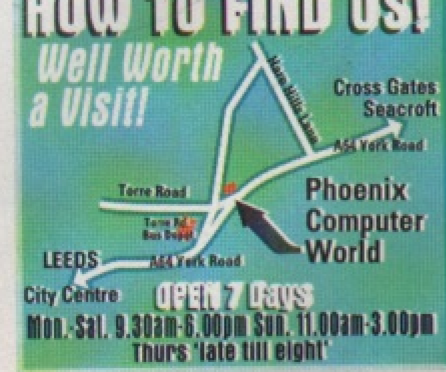
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THE NEW BOY

In a surprise move former CBM boss Kelly Sumner has left to take up the challenge of running a software company. CU's intrepid reporters went off to give his replacement, Dave Pleasance, a grilling.

Dave Pleasance has been at Commodore for 10 years. He was originally recruited to sell PCs, but three months into the job the project was abandoned. Fortunately Dave continued in sales and along the way thought up the Batman pack for the Amiga, which broke new ground in co-operation between computer manufacturers, software houses and Hollywood. His philosophy was emodied in the phrase, often used in the adverts of the day: " we don't sell computers, we sell dreams."

In July 1990 he took over as general Manager of Commodore Electronics Limited, which markets Commodore technology to all the parts of the world which do not have their own subsidiaries. After two years, in April '92 he became Vice President of consumer sales in the U.S.

Returning to the U.K. he re-inherited the international business, but took no part in the running of CBM UK – although he did work from their offices. Now he handles both that and half of the general managership of Commodore UK.

Well, he seems to have the experience, but does he have the vision? We gave him the third degree…

CU: One question that we'd like to ask to dispel any rumours is how the changeover happened? It did happen quite suddenly and there was no inkling that changes were afoot, then suddenly we get a fax that Kelly has left and you've taken over.

DP: Yes, you're absolutely right that there was no inkling to anybody, including Commodore. I can tell you that prior to the April ECTS show even Kelly didn't know. Basically he was approached at ECTS by an American software publisher, I think they do about $60-$70M a year of business…

CU: Is this GameTek?

DP: …yeah, which is not actually very large for an American software company but it is still a reasonable size and they are profitable. They have little or no presence in Europe. They sub-licensed *Humans* to Mirage.

What I understand is that the opportunity that Kelly has been given, which is a very good opportunity, is that he will be the General Manager of GameTek Europe. I believe the financial potential would mean that it could be very rewarding to him.

CU: So, now you're in charge, you've got a clean sheet, what are you going to do?

DP: One of the things I'd like to point out is that Kelly worked for me for a long time, and most of the things he did were what we had been doing for some time so I have to say there'll be more of the same. We have, I believe, a winning formula.

CU: OK, but there are a few problems. Recently we have been getting a large amount of mail from people experiencing delays in the warranty service. Has this situation cleared up?

DP: Yes. We have spoken to Wang and told them that, due to the unprecedented business we have been doing, we don't believe they can give us the level of support that we need. We are therefore looking to appoint a second, supplementary service to cater for any overspill.

CU: Is this overspill a result of a larger than expected failure rate of the machine?

DP: No, I'm quite happy that the machine is of sufficient quality. Both the A600 and A1200 are surface mount technology – their failure level is extremely low and improving. I think it's fair to say that with the A1200, as one would expect with new technology, there were some teething problems. But those were quickly spotted and sorted out.

To be fair to Wang, when we signed that contract with them the A1200 didn't even exist. We sold 44,000 A1200s in the Christmas period, a machine which they had no idea we were going to launch. We weren't even sure we were going to launch it.

CU: 1992 was one of the most successful years for the Amiga in terms of sales, in fact it was the most successful. As that is the case, why do you think that so many software companies are abandoning the



Amiga and concentrating on PC and console titles?

DP: Piracy. Absolutely unqualified piracy. The network of piracy that exists – it's not professional piracy, but amongst the children at school – it's so well established now. It's unthinkable that you can launch a product like, for example, *Zool*, and not have a level of sales that bears any relationship to the number of machines out there.

CU: But it's a vicious circle – less software available means the Amiga looks less attractive in the marketplace. There is a rumour that you will be moving totally to CD software.

DP: Well, there is no doubt that the future of this business does lie in CDs, and we are at the forefront of that. Whilst we have to acknowledge that the CDTV was not the greatest commercial venture it certainly allowed us to gain a great deal of expertise in the technology. We have a commitment that there will be a CD solution for every Amiga platform we have – obviously that will include the A1200.

CU: Since at the moment it is impossible to buy a CD upgrade for any current Amiga, don't you think that this is a priority if you want to cash in on any interest that the CDTV may have stirred up?

DP: We may well have something pre-Christmas, but to be honest it is not an issue I have been chasing specifically. Obviously I have more of an interest to chase it now. Having been at Commodore 10 years though, I mean, I don't know if we invented the phrase 'vapourware' but we are certainly as much a part of that philosophy as any other company. I just think it's wrong to indicate to people that such and such a product is going to be available when it obviously isn't.

CU: One thing which has been implied by Commodore UK in the past is that you don't have a great deal of say in what products are actually developed. Do you think there is a lack of communication there?

DP: That's an interesting point. I'd like to think that

As a new boss at Commodore was announced, a meeting of managements, if not minds, was arranged.





Half of a Commodore UK General Manager and his favourite piece of hardware (CD ROM drive available soon).

the relationship between sales & marketing worldwide and Commodore engineering is better than it has ever been, and that's down to one man, the new head of engineering Lew Eggebrecht. He is a rare specimen, a talented engineer who also has a great deal of commercial sense and he is bringing to market just what we need right now. Certainly in the past it has been the case that you've been called to a meeting and the engineers have said 'Here guys, look what we've got for you', and you'd say 'Well, that's wonderful, but who asked for it?' But it doesn't happen that way any more.

CU: There has been a lot of speculation about a CD console. Can you give us any more information on that?

DP: As I said before I don't believe in saying things are going to appear before we have actual units here, but we are constantly developing new technology and we always market our products aggressively. If there is an opportunity then we will do it. I think we are leaders in that respect.

CU: What about the higher end machines, the A4000? Commodore hasn't really pushed product in the professional arena.

DP: It depends on which country you are in. What you say is absolutely true in the U.K., it's kind of a cross that we bear. We happen to be the most successful manufacturer of home computers in the UK and people say to us 'How can I take your top end products when you make games machines?'.

The way I see Commodore is that we own, undeniably, the home computer market. We also have these niche markets for the A4000 and A3000s, but the biggest of business is mostly IBM PC business and a bit of Apple Mac business.

The PC market is rapidly going down the toilet – there is no money to be made. In the last three months 340 PC manufacturers in Taiwan have gone out of business. It's a market where everyone is selling the same spec machine and the only way to compete is on price.

When we launched the Amiga its graphics capability was far in advance of that on the PC. I think it's fair to say that we got fat and lazy, well, I certainly did, and we reached a stage where the PC got away from us with the SVGA mode. With the launch of AGA we have bridged that gap and we are at the same level now. We are currently testing the next step which will take us far ahead.

In conjunction with that we are developing the RISC technology. Our plan is to have PCs which are fully DOS compatible through Windows and fully Amiga compatible in the heart of the machine. These machines will be at a very competitive price point. I believe this will be very successful for us.

CU: What about upgrades for the current machines. Are you not concerned about Atari moving ahead with the DSP.

DP: I don't think that there is a product ready for groups like musicians yet. I mean if you look at any of the Atari products, it is of no use to anyone playing live. We will market a product when we have one that will work. Because of the size of that market it is likely to be a bundle. There is no point weighing down a product with extra costs like a MIDI port when only 20 per cent of users are going to do anything with them. Products like the Falcon don't worry us. We have a better engine and we have good relationships with Roland and Yamaha.

CU: Another popular question is are you planning a trade in deal for the A1200?

DP: I am trying to work out the mechanics of one now, probably through the independent stores, and probably very soon.

CU: Presumably the plan with the A600 is that you will continue to market that for some time to come. Is it destined to become the '64 of the future?

DP: You've taken the words out of my mouth. We perceive that there is a need for an entry-level price, which shouldn't be more than £200. I think there is a potential for that product in that price range.

CONCLUSION

Well, all in all, not a bad performance. The new creative boss at Commodore seems to have the wherewithall to lead the machine forward. He is also astoundingly open to ideas and his approach to 'open government' will mean still further co-operation with the media, which is good news for us, and good news for readers of CU AMIGA.



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PRINTERS

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Printers

As the electronics revolution continues, hardware prices are constantly falling and devices such as printers are cheap enough to be within the reach of almost any user. Mat Broomfield takes a look.

By designing the Amiga with both serial and parallel ports (sockets), Commodore have ensured that we can use virtually any printer on the market. But in order for the printer to be able to print anything, it needs to be given instructions in a specific format or language. In most cases, the Amiga speaks a slightly different dialect of the same language – some 'words' are the same, but there are enough differences to cause confusion.

In order for the two to communicate correctly, a translator is required. Enter the printer driver, a small program that resides in the Devs/Printers directory of your Workbench disk or the Devs/Printers drawer of your hard drive.



BUYER'S GUIDE

A number of drivers are on the Extras disk, which is supplied with your Amiga, and these are likely to work with most printers. If not, you will find that additional drivers can be purchased from PD libraries.

If you really can't find a suitable driver anywhere, there are a number of programs available which you can use to create your own driver from scratch.

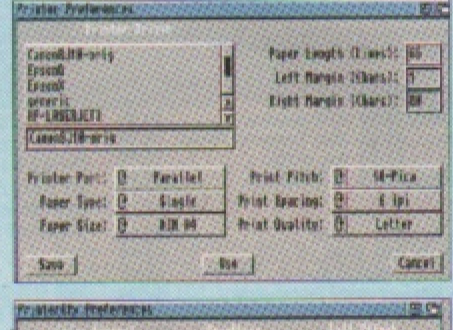
COPYCAT PRINTER

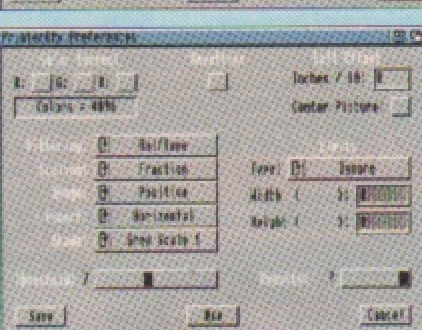
Ironically, the chances are you don't own a printer supported by the driver on your Workbench disk. Those printers which sell in the largest volumes are not necessarily those which home users buy. After all business users still account for the largest sector of the printer market. The second factor concerns a feature called 'Emulation'. This is a printer's ability to 'pretend' to be a different printer entirely, so that instructions that were intended for one printer can be understood by any others which emulate it. In the business market, Laserjet and IBM Proprinter are two of the most popular printers to emulate. Your printer's manual will tell you which emulations it's capable of.

To find out how to copy a driver onto your Workbench disk, see the box. Once that's done, you've got to tell your Amiga that you want the new driver to be used.

To do that, double-click the icon labelled Prefs on the Workbench screen. When the Prefs window opens, double-click the Printer icon to load the printer preferences program. This allows you to customise the Amiga's output to suit the printer you're using. Although it has a different appearance under Workbench 1.3 and 2.0, the options are identical.

You must start by specifying whether you are connecting your printer to the serial or parallel port. The default is parallel and in most cases this will be correct. When you've done that, you need to indicate the printer driver that you will be using.





Setting your printer's graphic preferences correctly won't affect whether or not it can actually print graphics, but it can make a significant difference to the quality of the finished print-out.

Loading the printer driver

Once you've determined which driver you need, you must copy it to the appropriate place on your Workbench disk (or hard drive if you're using one). Here's how you do it:

1. Turn your computer on and load a working copy of your Workbench disk. You should never use the original disk in case you make a mistake. If you're using a hard drive, switch your computer on and wait for the Workbench screen to appear.

2. Double-click the Workbench icon to open a window showing the contents of the disk. Double-click the Shell icon to open a CLI window. If you are using Workbench 1.2, double-click the System icon, then in the window that opens, double-click the CLI icon to open a CLI window.

3. Type DIR EXTRAS:DEVS/PRINTERS and press <return>. Where I've written the word EXTRAS you should substitute the exact name of the disk containing your drivers. Therefore if you are using the Workbench 2 extras disk you would type DIR EXTRAS2.0:DEVS/PRINTERS <return>.

Tip: If you're not sure of the name of the disk containing the drivers, remove the Workbench disk (unless you're using a hard drive) and insert the disk containing the drivers. After a few moments, a disk icon will appear on the Workbench screen. Below that is the name of the disk.

4. A list of available printer drivers will appear in the CLI window. If they scroll past too quickly, enlarge the window using the zoom or sizing gadgets. When you see the driver that matches your requirements, make a careful note of its exact name.

5. Type COPY EXTRAS:DEVS/PRINTERS/YOURDRIVER TO WORKBENCH1.3:DEVS/PRINTERS <return>. Again you should substitute the name of your drivers disk where I've written EXTRAS. You should also enter the name of the driver you require where I've written DRIVERNAME and the full name of your Workbench disk where I've written WORKBENCH1.3. When you press return the computer will prompt you for your drivers disk after which it will ask for your Workbench disk again. When you've inserted the Workbench disk and the drive light goes out type ENDCLI <return> to get rid of the CLI window.

There may not be a list of drivers available, but the custom and generic drivers will almost always be listed. There should be at least one extra driver on the disk – choose the driver you require by scrolling through the available items with the scroll arrows. Theoretically, having specified just the interface and driver, you should be able to print. In practice, although you could print, the page layout could be a mess, especially if you are using unusually sized paper.

OPTIONS

Here's a quick look at the options in the printer preferences program:

PAPER SIZE – This gadget lets you specify the size of the paper that you will be printing on. The choices are:

	Width	Height
U.S. Letter	8.5 inches 216mm	11 inches 279mm
U.S. Legal	8.5 inches 216mm	14.0 inches 356mm
Narrow Tractor	9.5 inches 241mm	11 inches 279mm
Wide Tractor	17.875 inches 454mm	11 inches 279mm
DIN A4	8.3 inches 210mm	11.7 inches 297mm
DIN A5	5.8 inches 148mm	8.3 inches 210mm

The latter two sizes are only available under Workbench 2.0 and above. If none of these sizes is suitable, you can choose Custom and specify your paper size using the 'Length' requestor.

LENGTH – This determines the total number of lines on the page. For example if you are using Narrow Tractor paper which is 11 inches long, with a Spacing of 8 LPI, the total paper length will be 88 (11x8). If you selected Custom with the Paper Type gadget this is where you must indicate the length of your page.

LEFT MARGIN – This is where you can specify how far from the left edge of the page in characters you want printing to begin. For example, if you want a half inch margin and you are printing in 12 pitch, you should enter 6.

RIGHT MARGIN – The figure in this requestor determines how far, in characters from the left edge of the page, the right margin should begin. For example, if your paper is 8.5 inches wide and you're using 10 characters per inch, you can fit a maximum of 85 characters across the page. To leave a half inch right-hand margin simply deduct five (10/2) characters from 85. Therefore the right margin would be 80.

PAPER TYPE – This cycle gadget lets you choose between two types of paper: Fanfold, used by sprocket feed printers, and Single Sheet.

PITCH – This is where you can specify the size of text that you wish to use. There are three choices: Pica (10 characters per inch (CPI)), Elite (12 CPI) and Fine (15_17 CPI).

SPACING – This is where you can specify the line spacing of your print-outs. Choose between six and eight lines per inch.

QUALITY – Most printers are capable of printing in high (Letter) quality mode or low (Draft) quality. Draft mode usually uses less ink and is faster. Use this gadget to specify your preferred printing mode.

The selections that you make in the printer preferences screen will be used each time you print anything. However, many programs (such as word processors, DTP packages, etc) override the selections that you make here.

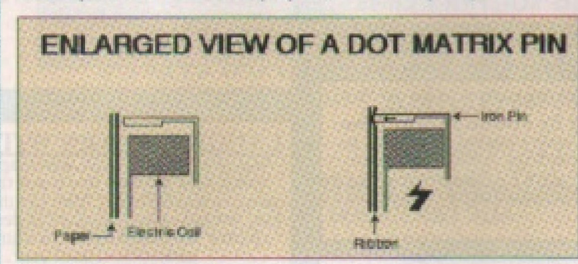
If you are happy with the choices you've made, click OK (if you're using Workbench 1.3 or earlier) then click Save (all versions of Workbench). Your new settings will be saved to disk, and from now on whenever you boot using this version of Workbench, your printer settings will already be configured.

How printers work

DOT MATRIX (IMPACT) PRINTER

A dot matrix is the least sophisticated in construction of all home printers. The print head contains nine, 18 or 24 tiny iron pins arranged in a vertical strip. The more pins there are, the higher the resolution of the printer. There are also an equivalent number of tiny electromagnetic coils. As the print head passes over the paper, electricity is passed

ENLARGED VIEW OF A DOT MATRIX PIN



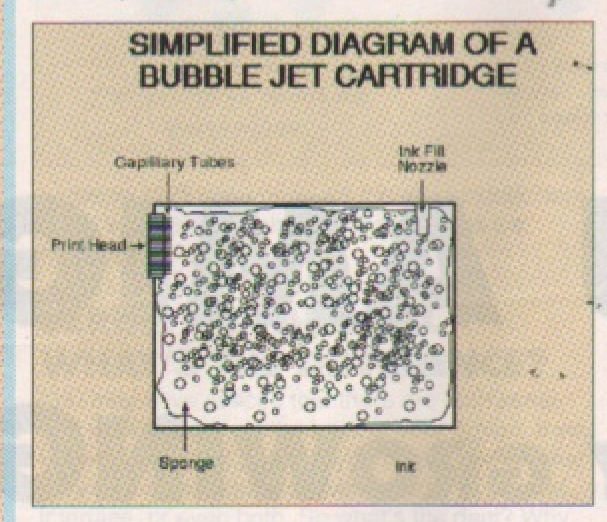
through the coils, turning them into magnets which attract the pins towards them.

As the pin moves towards the coil, its end strikes an inked ribbon, which in turn strikes the paper, leaving an impression.

BUBBLE JET

For the last couple of years bubble jet printers have been wowing computer users with their superb quality to price ratio. For less than a third of the price of the cheapest laser, bubble jet printers such as the Canon BJ10, Star SJ48 and the Kodak Diconix can produce near-laser output at a resolution of up to 360 dpi.

SIMPLIFIED DIAGRAM OF A BUBBLE JET CARTRIDGE



The most important part of modern bubble jet printers is the replacement ink cartridge. Unlike other types of printer in which the print heads and ink (or toner) are two separate entities, the two have been integrated into a single disposable unit where the BJs are concerned.

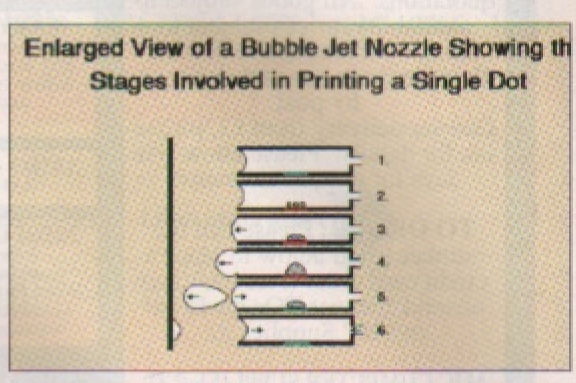
A bubble jet cartridge consists of an ink reservoir containing a piece of sponge which is there to ensure a consistent and dirt-free ink supply to the heads.

The heads are also built into the cartridge and these are essentially nothing more than straightforward hollow tubes with heaters attached to them. Initially ink is fed to heads by capillary action alone, but once printing has begun this IS assisted by suction.

If you look at the six step diagram of a bubble jet nozzle, pictured above right, you'll see how a droplet of ink is transferred to the paper.

1. The nozzle is full of ink and waiting to go.

Enlarged View of a Bubble Jet Nozzle Showing th Stages Involved in Printing a Single Dot



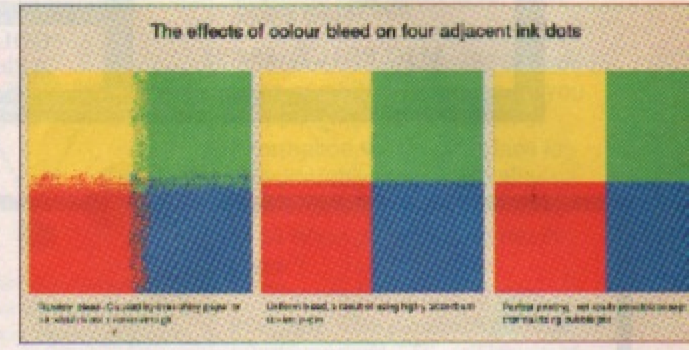
2. The piezo electric heater warms up and air bubbles form in the ink above it.

3 & 4. Because the capillary feed tubes are so small, the ink cannot flow back into them quickly enough, so as the air bubbles expand, ink is forced out of the open end of the nozzle.

5. As the heater is turned off, the ink rapidly flows back into the nozzle. This contraction severs the droplet which had previously been forced out of the nozzle, firing it directly at the nearby sheet of paper.

6. The element is cold, the quick drying ink is on the paper, and the nozzle is refilled by a combination of vacuum and capillary action.

The effects of colour bleed on four adjacent ink dots



LASER PRINTER

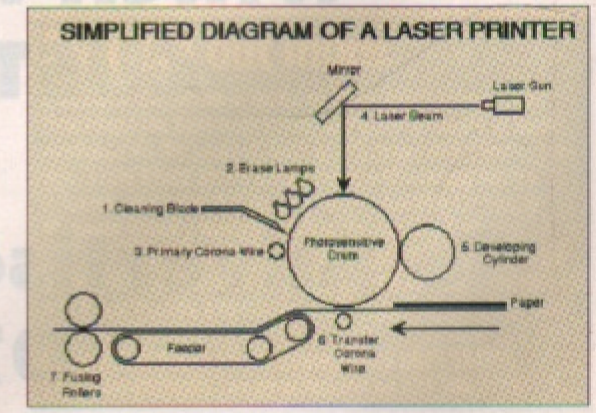
Of all the printers suitable for home use that are available on the market today, a laser printer is undoubtedly the most complex in its design and construction.

At its heart lies a mirror-surfaced photosensitive metal drum upon which the ink is placed, and which in turn transfers the ink onto the paper.

In order for the drum to hold the ink it has to be given a negative charge of about -600 volts. This is done via the primary corona wire (3). When the entire surface of the drum is negatively charged, a laser beam (4) is used to selectively remove the charge from parts of the drum.

It does this in such a way as to create a non-charged area which is a mirrored template of the image that you want to eventually appear – the areas which are to hold the ink have no charge,

SIMPLIFIED DIAGRAM OF A LASER PRINTER



»

Colour printer green refill

With environmental issues remaining as important as ever, and refill packs the name of the game, it's nice to know that you can do your bit by buying ribbon and cartridge refills for your printer. If you own a bubble or ink jet device you can buy bottles of specially formulated ink (complete with a syringe to transfer it). If you own a dot matrix printer you can buy replacement ribbons. These ribbons can be cleanly inserted into your existing ribbon cartridge without needing to replace the plastic casing as well.

Not only are refills environmentally friendly, but they're good for your wallet too as they only cost half of the price of standard ribbons.

If your printer uses single colour ribbons they can be revitalised without having to replace them at all. A great product called Ribbon Refresh is sprayed onto the ribbon where it reactivates the dried ink giving it a new lease of life. A single £10 can of fluid can be used to pep up three ribbons.

whilst the areas that will remain blank still hold a high negative charge.

The rotating drum passes by the developing station (5). Inside the developing station, toner powder has also been negatively charged and placed in suspension so that it forms a cloud of micro-fine powder. The parts of the drum that still hold a negative charge, repel the toner powder, whereas the powder is attracted to the parts that have no charge.

The drum continues to rotate until it reaches a point where it passes the paper on which the image is to be printed. On the other side of the paper is the Transfer corona wire (6). This emits positive ions giving the paper a very strong positive charge. This charge is so strong that it literally rips the negatively charged toner particles from the surface of the drum, and onto the paper.

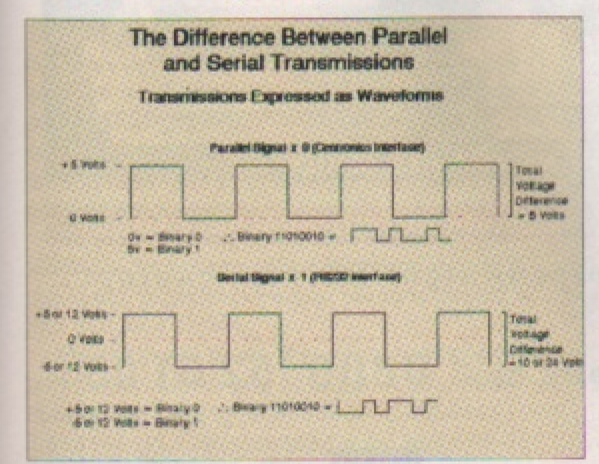
The paper moves beyond the drum and its charge is removed to stop the toner from being attracted to areas other than those which are supposed to contain ink.

GRAVITY

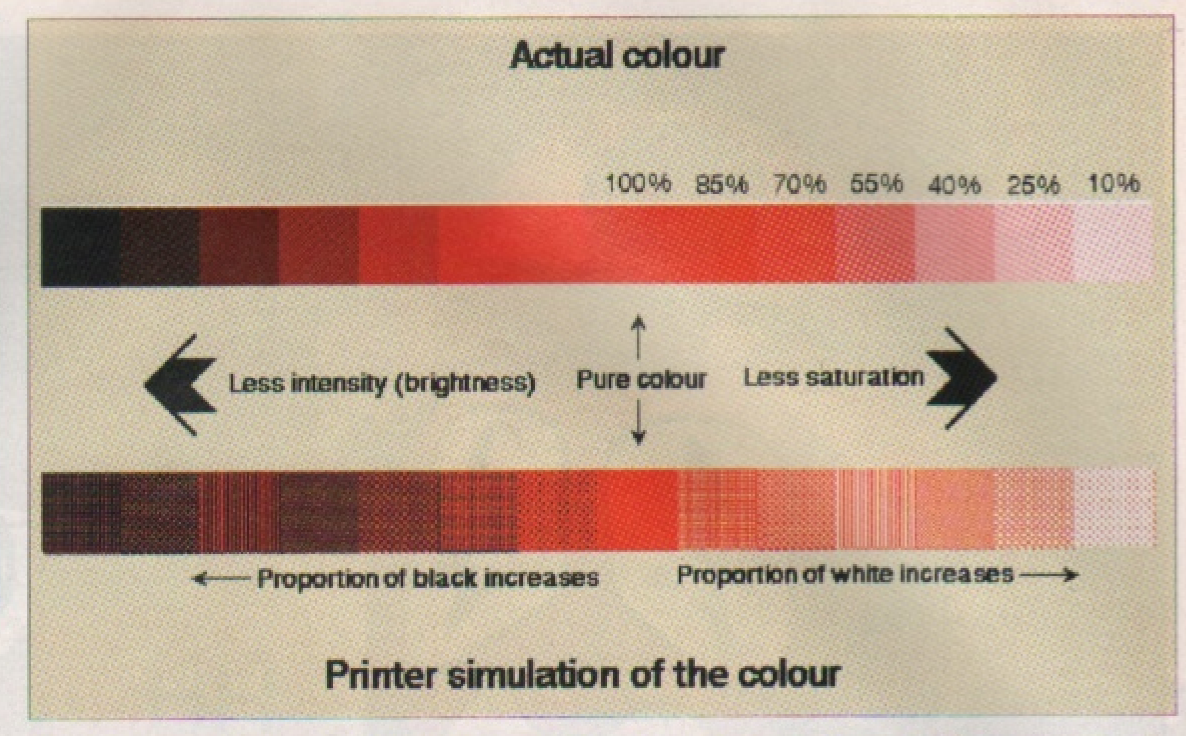
From now on, the ink powder is literally held on the paper by gravity until the paper reaches the fusing rollers (7). The fusing rollers heat the paper as it passes and because the toner is a compound made of black plastic and iron, it melts onto the surface of the paper, where it will then remain permanently.

The next time that a page is printed, a cleaning blade (1) first scrapes any remaining ink from the surface of the drum. Erase lamps (2) then discharge any remaining potential that the drum may hold, thus ensuring that its surface is clean and holds no charge in readiness for the cycle to begin again.

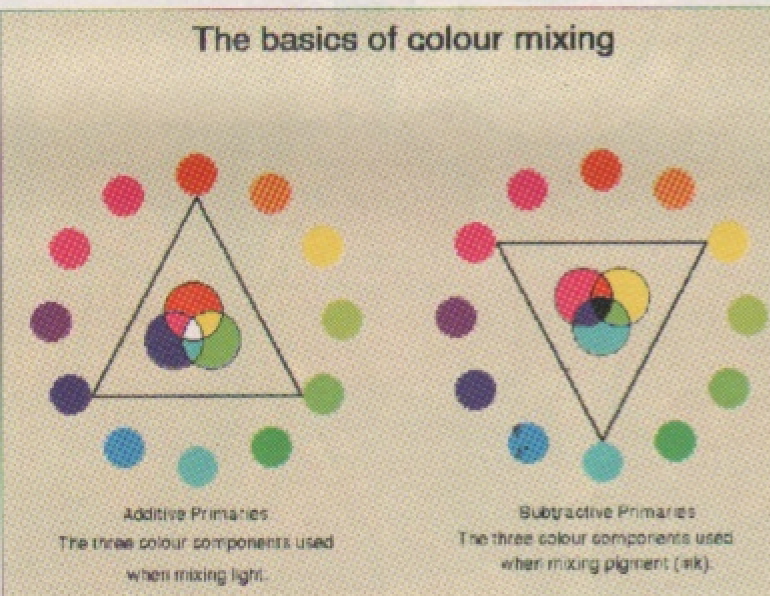
If many copies of the same page are printed, the drum does not go through this cleaning cycle



The difference between parallel and serial transmissions is explained above in terms of waveforms.



Because a printer doesn't have an infinite number of different coloured inks, it has to simulate varying intensities of colour by using a variety of dither patterns. The pure colour is in the middle of the colour strip. To make the colour lighter, a printer simply prints the dots of coloured ink further apart so that the white paper dilutes the colour. To create darker colour, increasingly greater amounts of black ink are added to the original colour.



between each copy because the electrostatic 'template' will remain unaltered for as long as it's needed.

SERIAL VS PARALLEL – WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

You may have noticed that there are both serial and parallel ports on the back of your Amiga. If you know much about printers, you may be aware that they also come equipped with a serial or parallel interface, or even both. So what's the deal? Why have two different types of interface at all?

To understand that, we have to first look at what exactly is transmitted down the line every time you tell your printer to print. A printer is completely dependant upon control (or escape) codes and character or pixel data. The control codes are instructions which tell the printer how to interpret and output the data.

Both control codes and character/pixel data are nothing more than streams of numbers, and these numbers are sent to the printer as binary digits _ ones and zeros. Eight binary digits (or bits as they're known) are required to send a single character of information to the printer.

PARALLEL LINES

As its name suggests, a parallel interface allows you to send a number of bits of information at a time (in parallel). In fact, a parallel cable can handle eights bits (one byte) at a time. A serial interface is only capable of handling one bit at a time, so as you can imagine, transmission of information via this interface is considerably slower. So why bother about serial transmission at all when parallel is so much faster?.

The reason is one of data integrety. The parallel interface uses standard TTL volt levels of 0 and +5 volts, whereas the serial port uses a range of +12 to -12 volts. Because the differential between the two states is so great with serial transmission, it's far easier to detect and interpret the signal, and far less likely that any interference (known as line noise) will distort the results. The signal will not dissipate quite as quickly through losses in the wire. This makes serial transmission ideal for printer link-ups over longer distances (anything above three metres), or in circumstances where there is likely to be a high amount of line noise.

In the interests of accuracy, I should just mention that some serial devices only generate a voltage of +/-5 volts, giving a voltage differential of 10 volts which is still double that of parallel transmission.

Thanks to Dave Butler and Adrian Telford of GEC Sensors for their help with this section.

Finding out more

If you are interested in learning more about printers and how to get the best from them, there are a couple of books available on the subject, both of which provide good coverage. From Bruce Smith Books there's Mastering Amiga Printers, and from Databecker, distributed by Computer Manuals, there's *Amiga Printers: Inside and Out.*

Both books describe the purpose of drivers, as well as going into considerable detail about the variety of advanced and basic escape and control code sequences used by your printer.

Bruce Smith Books can be contacted on 0923 894355.
Computer Manuals can be contacted on 021 706 1188.

»

Printers under test

DOT MATRIX PRINTERS

EPSON LX100

This is the ideal monochrome printer for the person on a restricted budget. Although it uses dot matrix technology which is both noisy and outdated, the print quality is more than adequate for home use, either for personal correspondence, or for school or college work.

Its print speed of up to 200 characters per second is quite high considering its low price, but even more surprising is the inclusion of a 50-sheet paper feeder which automatically refills the printer as each page is used. Alternatively you can use fanfold paper together with the tractor feed unit which is also included.

Because it's an Epson, finding a suitable driver is no trouble, even for graphics printing.

The good value is reinforced by its low-cost replacement ribbons which at only £4.95 for three million characters' worth of draft mode printing means that this is certainly one of the cheapest machines to buy and maintain. Its graphics quality is far from outstanding and is suitable only for initial proofing. I also noticed that the printer tends to produce severe banding. Nevertheless, it does represent great value for money.



This is certainly my budget recommendation of the year.

Available from: Epson UK, Campus 100, Marylands Avenue, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 7EZ. Tel; 0442 61144.
Price: £189 (ex VAT).

93%



The LX100 offers great value, but the results can sometimes be lacking.

EPSON FX870

Clearly designed as a workhorse printer, ideally suited to an office or similar environment, the FX870 seems to place speed, flexibility and durability uppermost in its list of priorities.

This printer has a great range of paper handling tools (some of which are available only as optional extras). This means that you can use continuous or cut sheet paper, and you can even have two tractor feed units connected simultaneously if you need them.

At 380 CPS it's the second fastest of all the printers reviewed here, even exceeding the output of the Oki OL400E (an LED printer).

At £429 it's extremely expensive, especially when you compare it with other nine pin printers. I suspect that this high price is to take account of its very solid construction. It really does feel as if it's designed to be working 10 years down the road.

Again, the life of the ribbon means excellent economy, and this makes it an ideal choice for you if you want to be able to output a lot of text documents where quality is of secondary importance.





Although expensive, the Epson FX870 is built to last.

Available from: Epson UK, Campus 100, Marylands Avenue, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 7EZ. Tel; 0442 61144.
Price: £429 (ex VAT).

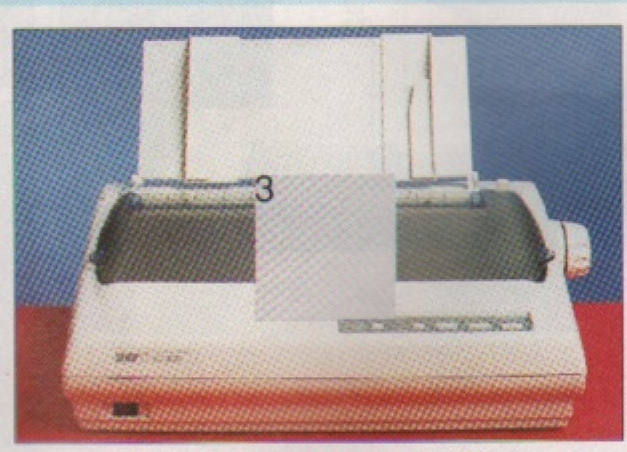
60%

STAR LC200

Star printers seem designed with maximum flexibility in mind, and they are suited to users who are not entirely sure what they want from a printer. They have lots of interesting options such as fonts and tractor feeds, yet I don't get an impression of great quality. The LC200 is a nine pin colour printer.

You're not going to use this printer for professional documents, but it will certainly add a real touch of style to essays, personal letters and that kind of thing.

Being only nine pin, the colour mixing is not particularly subtle, and its Epson X emulation means that printing a full screen at maximum resolution can be a tedious task taking well over 15 minutes.



At 200 characters per second (CPS), it prints text at a respectable speed, and the range of good quality built-in fonts ensures that you can add plenty of variety to your documents.

This printer is worth a look, but it's definitely not at the leading edge of printer technology.



The LC200 is ideal for home use.

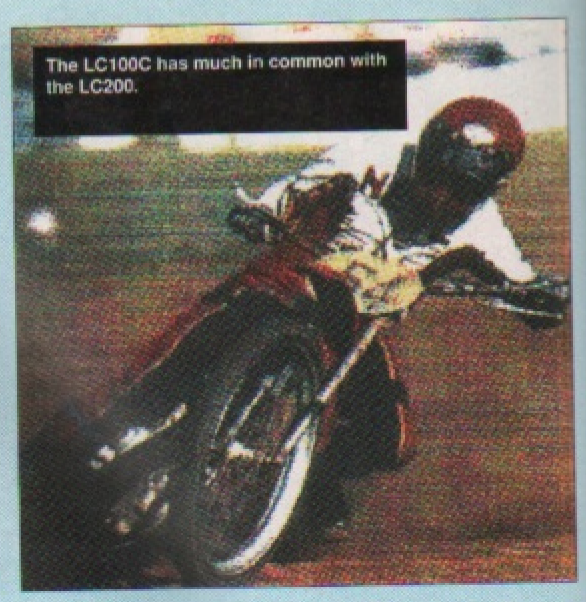
Available from: Star Micronics UK ltd, Star House, Peregrine Business Park, Gomm Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP13 7DL.
Tel: 0494 471111. Price: £259.

72%

»

» STAR LC100C




The LC100C has much in common with the LC200.

When you compare the LC100C and the LC200, there really is very little to choose between them. They appear to be aimed at very similar markets and have a lot of features in common

As both printers are nine pin dot matrix devices and use the same Epson X driver, their output resolution and quality are identical, as is the amount of noise that they create. Again the LC100C is excruciatingly slow when printing in graphics mode.

This is due to the driver which forces the print head to make three passes for each of the colours to be printed.

Ribbons for the LC100C are almost half the price of those of the LC200 despite the fact that they both have a similar lifespan. When you consider this in conjunction with the LC100C's slightly lower price, it certainly seems like the prudent choice for the buyer on a budget.

Like the LC200, this printer is not really designed for anything more than home use, for which it can be an economical choice.

Available from: Star Micronics UK Ltd, Star House, Peregrine Business Park, Gomm Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP13 7DL. Tel: 0494 471111. Price: £219.

76%

STAR LC24-20II

The LC24-20II is a 24-pin printer designed for users who require flexibility and quality. Its optional extras alone indicate that the printer would comfortably sit in a working environment, what with sheet and tractor feeders and font and RAM cards. To a certain extent this is belied by its relatively slow print speed of only 167CPS in draft mode. However if you work in an environment where speed isn't important, but output quality is, then this could be the choice.

With a resolution of 360x360 dots per inch this monochrome printer is ideal for printing newsletters and the like, but unfortunately its resolution is restricted by the Epson Q driver needed to use it.

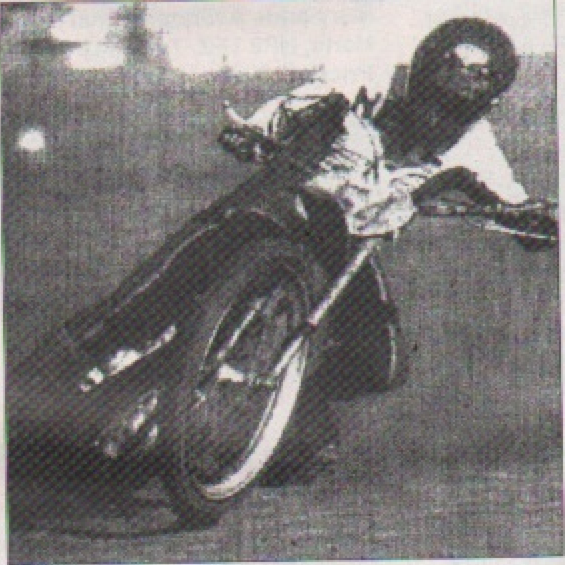
A 30K input buffer means that you will spend more time working and less time waiting for the printer to finish its work. Although the printer has a quiet mode, it's still distractingly noisy when printing and in fact it was the loudest of all printers tested.

On the plus side, at only £5.00 for a two million character ribbon, the printer operates at only 1.32 pence per page.

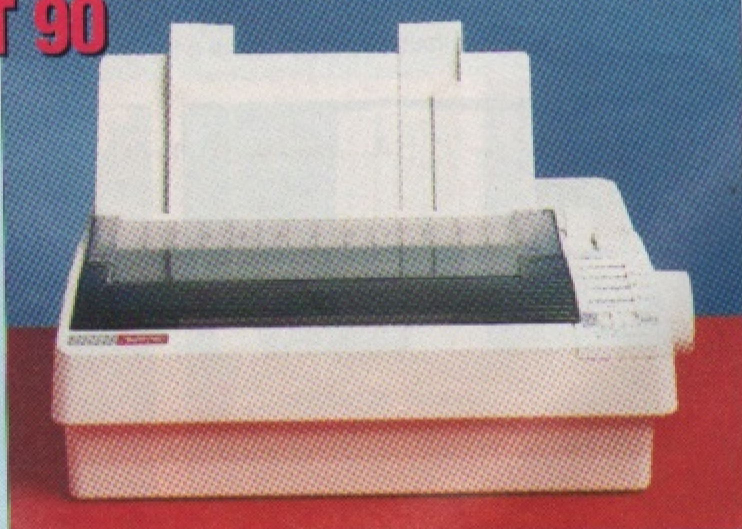
Available from: Star Micronics UK ltd, Star House, Peregrine Business Park, Gomm Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP13 7DL. Tel: 0494 471111. Price: £299.

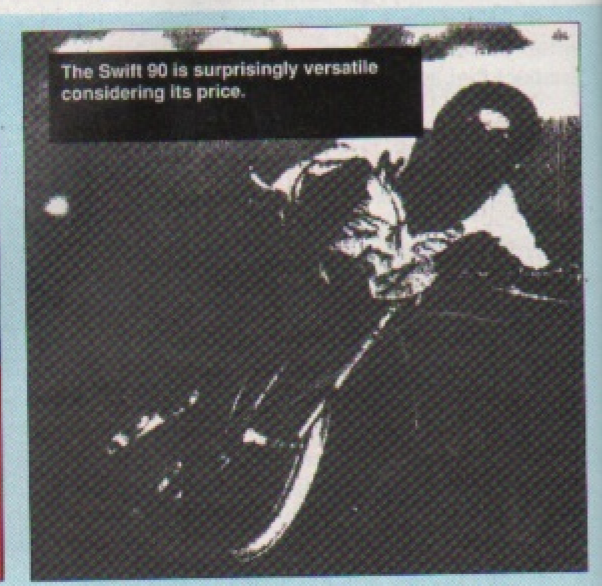
82%




The LC24-20II may be slow, but you are guaranteed high-quality printouts.

CITIZEN SWIFT 90




The Swift 90 is surprisingly versatile considering its price.

Another monochrome nine pin printer, this one has an even lower resolution than the last four. However, it is capable of printing at a brisk 240 characters per second and even has an optional colour kit so that you can upgrade it for colour printing at a later date if you decide this is necessary.

The Swift 90 has seven onboard fonts, which provide unexpected versatility at the price. Printers such as this are particularly effective when used with packages such as *Wordworth* that are capable of accessing multiple fonts in a document.

Incidentally, as a sign of their commitment to their customers, Citizen now supply a great Print Manager program free with all their colour printers. This nifty program (which is worth at least £40) contains a selection of drivers so that you can get the best out of your printer, both in terms of quality and speed.

Available from: Citizen Europe Ltd, Citizen House, 11 Waterside Drive, Langley Business Park, Langley, Berkshire, SL3 6EZ. Tel: 0753 584111. Price: £199.

87%

CITIZEN SWIFT 240C

This is the only 24-pin colour printer that we have reviewed in these pages and its output is quite visibly a head and shoulders above the other colour printers. The primary improvement is in the subtlety of its colour mixing.

Because it uses a matrix capable of 360x360 dpi, the printer is better able to approximate the 4096 shades that are visible on an Amiga screen. Obviously, this improved resolution means that the images that you choose to print can be more detailed too.

Output, while still being quite slow to generate, is well worth the wait and will add a real look of style to your creations, be they amateur or professional. There are several benefits to using the Print Manager – for a start, the already high quality of your print-outs can be improved drastically, to say nothing of reducing the time taken to actually produce them.

At 215cpi, the 240 isn't even as fast as its junior relative, but the results are worth that little extra wait. The printer has nine on-board fonts, two of which are scalable.

Incidentally, Citizen are the only printer company to include specific set-up procedures for Amiga owners, and this is a move which really wins them my vote. Their manuals are much easier to understand because of this.

Available from: Citizen Europe Ltd, Citizen House, 11 Waterside Drive, Langley Business Park, Langley, Berkshire, SL3 6EZ. Tel: 0753 584111. Price: £359 (ex VAT).

86%



The 240C offers all the advantages of 24-pin printing.

CITIZEN PN48

This is really a hybrid machine. Called a thermal transfer printer, it transfers material from a ribbon to the page using a heated print head. The heat means that although the pins are very much like those found on a normal dot matrix printer, the area of material on the ribbon affected is slightly greater than the pin area. This eliminates the spaces between dots which are normally visible on a dot matrix and helps to smooth the edges of the pixels.

The advantage of such a system as opposed to older thermal printers which required heat sensitive paper, is that the ribbons are a damned sight cheaper than the paper used to be. Even so, at best a single £3.50 ribbon only just manages half a million characters which means that you'll be paying over three and half pence a page just for your text print outs, and far, far more if you start using graphics.

The PN48 is the most portable of all the portables reviewed measuring just under a foot wide and less than four inches high and deep. Its tiny size makes its 360x360 DPI resolution all the more impressive, but thanks to its Epson Q emulation, unless you can find or create your own driver for it, you won't be able to print at anywhere near this resolution.

At £325 its price is a tad high, even considering the technology it uses. Nevertheless, it's not outrageously expensive by any means, and if you genuinely need this degree of portability, you could certainly do worse.

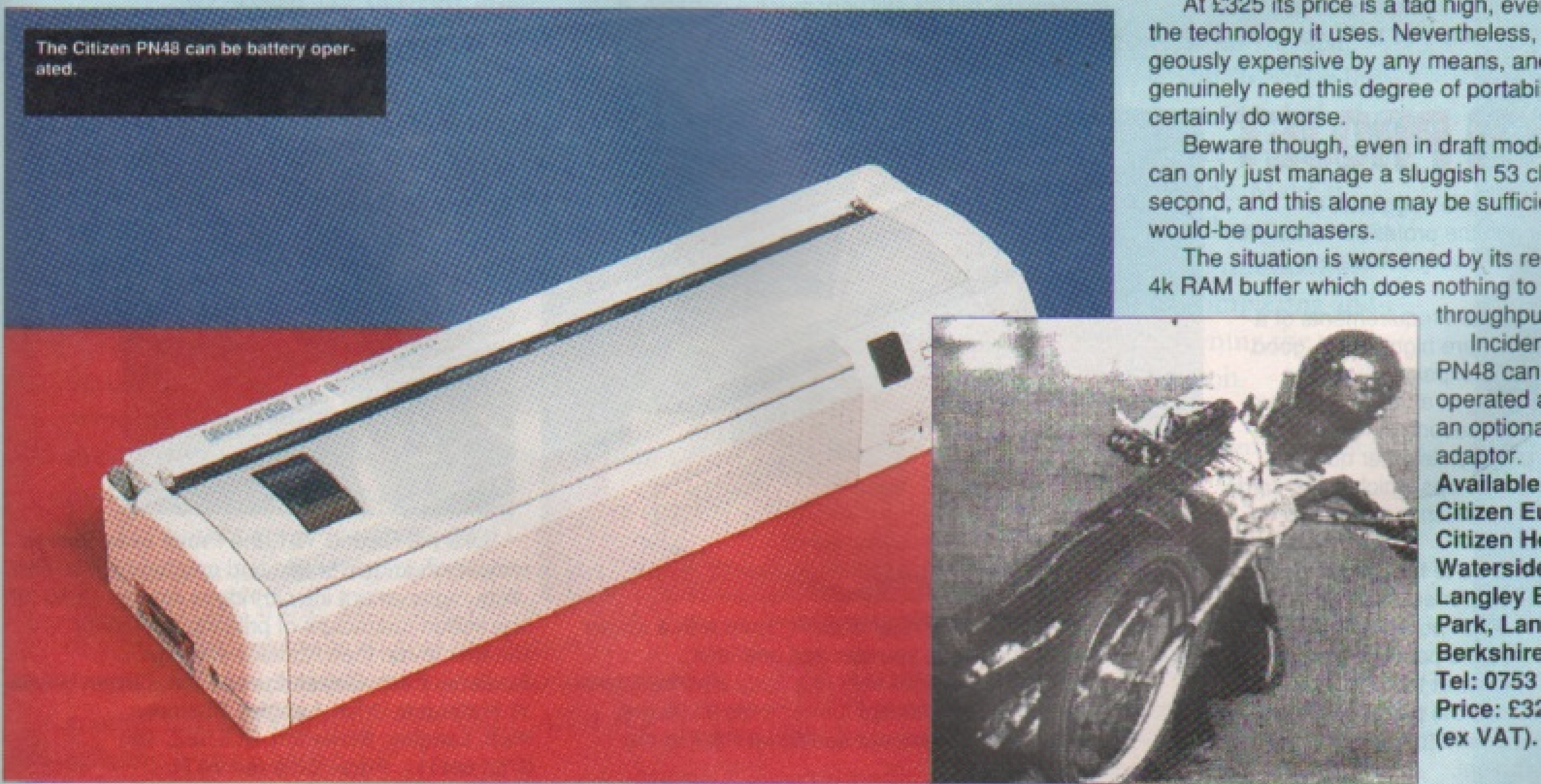
Beware though, even in draft mode, the PN48 can only just manage a sluggish 53 characters per second, and this alone may be sufficient to deter would-be purchasers.

The situation is worsened by its relatively small 4k RAM buffer which does nothing to increase the throughput of data.

Incidentally, the PN48 can be battery operated and even has an optional car battery adaptor.

Available from: Citizen Europe Ltd, Citizen House, 11 Waterside Drive, Langley Business Park, Langley, Berkshire, SL3 6EZ. Tel: 0753 584111. Price: £325 (ex VAT).

76%



The Citizen PN48 can be battery operated.

»

Ink jets

KODAK DICONIX 180si





The Kodak Diconix 180si takes up less room than a sheet of A4 paper.

Thanks to ink jet technology, the quality-for-price ratio of printers has greatly improved over recent years. Unfortunately the Diconix 180si is not one of the machines to follow that trend. At 192x192dpi its resolution is low even by nine pin dot matrix standards. However, its graphics output is better than any dot matrix devices, most notably in that it doesn't suffer from any form of banding.

At 145 CPS in draft mode, its printing speed is well over twice as fast as Citizen's PN48, but the down-side to this is the fact that its typefaces are uniformly bland and pallid.

Replacement ink cartridges are quite expensive at £24.75 excluding VAT, especially when they only last for between one and 2.6 million characters. This means that the operating costs can run as high as 2.75 pence per page, and you should take this into consideration when deciding which printer to buy.

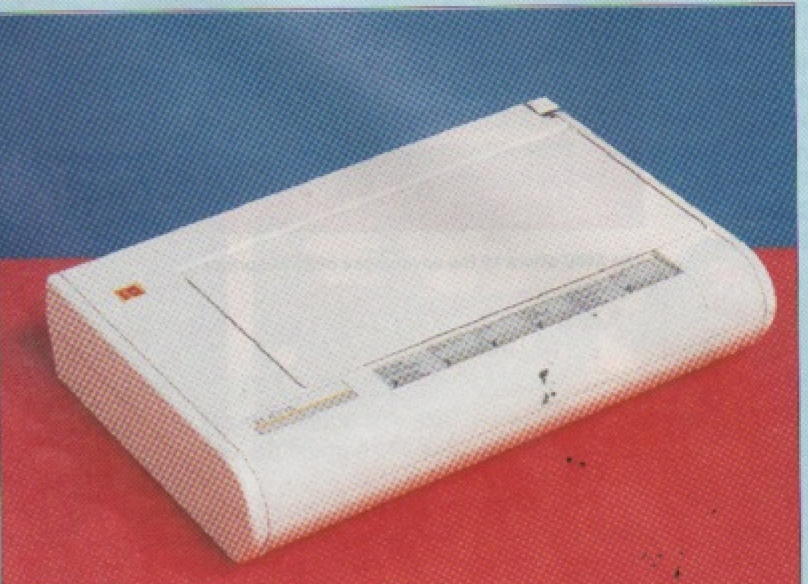
One great advantage that the printer does offer in comparison to the others reviewed here is very low operating noise. Because there are no impacts involved, it doesn't even generate as much volume as a cat's purr!

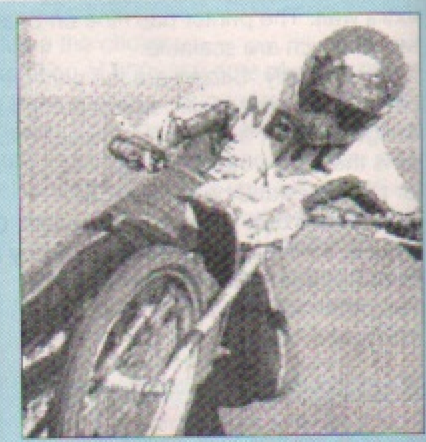
Ultimately though, its asking price of £270 excluding VAT is just too high considering the excellent alternatives.

Available from: Kodak Ltd, Kodak House, P.O. Box 66, Station Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP1 1JU. Price: £270.

67%

KODAK DICONIX 701





The Kodak Diconix 701 supports HP Deskjet emulation.

The Diconix 701 is everything that the 180si is not. With a printing speed of 200CPS in draft mode, the 701 is more than fast enough for everyday use, especially considering its 300x300 dpi resolution. The printer also manages a nippy 120CPS in letter quality (LQ) mode too. Better yet, the printer supports HP Deskjet emulation, so it'll be no problem finding a driver which utilises its full resolution.

Graphics printing is quite fast, and this is helped by its 24K RAM buffer. I was, however, disappointed to notice slight banding on graphics prints which even the cheaper 180si managed to avoid, even so, the quality of the print-out means that this is more than suitable for DTP work and a range of professional applications.

Again, I feel that this printer is a little overpriced, especially compared to Canon's BJ10 and Star's SJ48 which offer similar specifications for about £250.

In terms of size, the 701 is a tad larger than its stablemate, but it's still very much a portable. It can also run on batteries, and can be connected up to a car battery using third party adaptors.

Available from: Kodak Ltd, Kodak House, P.O. Box 66, Station Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP1 1JU. Tel: 0442 61122. Price: £399.

86%

CITIZEN PROJET





Citizen's Projet is a very competent inkjet.

The Projet, as its name suggests, is Citizen's offering in the professional ink jet printer stakes, and a very competent offering it is too.

The most important requirements of a professional printer are high speed, good paper handling and expandability. The Projet whizzes along at a very impressive 360 characters per second in high-speed draft mode. Strangely, its letter quality speed slumps to 120 cps which is the same as the Diconix 701 which is a hundred pounds cheaper.

Paper is delivered to the printer via an automatic sheet feeder supplied by a 150-sheet paper bin which pokes out of the top of the machine. In theory the paper is then caught by a bizarre paper catcher at the bottom of the machine. In practice the paper never quite fell where it was supposed to – a minor but nevertheless irritating problem.

Although the Projet doesn't come with a tractor feed as standard, you can add one later.

The Projet comes with four fairly standard typefaces, and it can accept further fonts on plug-in cards. It will also accept additional RAM in the same format.

Like the Diconix 701, the Projet uses Deskjet emulation to deliver text and graphics at 300 DPI. With replacement ink cartridges costing 14.50 for one million characters of printing, it's slightly cheaper to run than Kodak's offering.

Available from: Citizen Europe Ltd, Citizen House, 11 Waterside Drive, Langley Business Park, Langley, Berkshire, SL3 6EZ. Tel: 0753 584111. Price: £496 (ex VAT).

88%

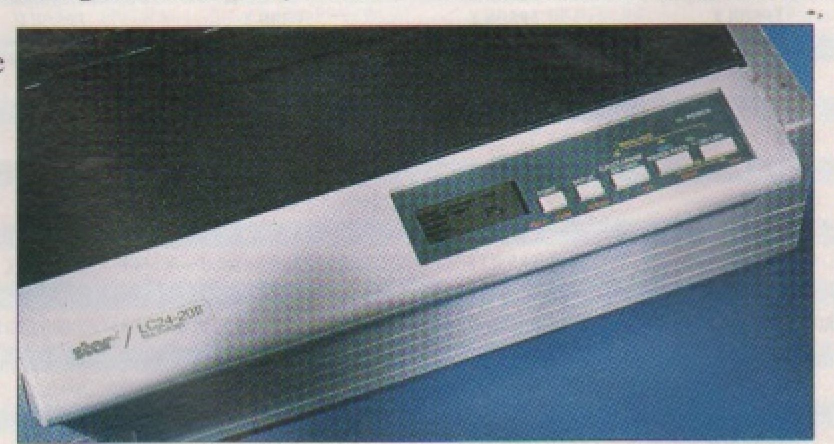


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Trust Star to prove that top quality can be delivered at low cost.

A fact that puts the *Business Series* in a league of its own with eight dot matrix machines performing superbly wherever you need printing excellence. And they're all compatible with your existing computer and software.

The LC-100, for example, is the UK's lowest cost colour printer. (Costing less than many other mono only machines!) While the LC24-200 Colour demonstrates that high quality 24-pin colour printing and advanced paper handling needn't break the bank.



But if you want first-rate mono only printing, you need the LC-20 – probably the world's most popular multi-functional printer at a budget-price.

For higher specifications, the LC24-15 has all you'd expect in a leading high performance 24-pin machine – and more! Including the extra benefit of a full width carriage to give the option of printing wider spreadsheets and the total range of general purpose multiple copy tasks. All that's missing is the high price!

In fact, Star value-for-money means the addition of many features* which you might expect to be costly extras – all designed to improve printing quality and efficiency.

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No wonder the reliable versatile *Business Series* has proved itself the first choice across Europe. Make it your business to get more information by completing and returning the coupon.

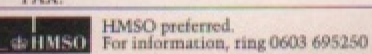
Star Micronics U.K. Ltd., Star House, Peregrine Business Park, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP13 7DL.
Tel: 0494 471111. Fax: 0494 473333.

*Please consult the brochure for features listing on each model.
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BUSINESS PRINTERS

» EPSON SQ870

The Epson SQ870 is a direct rival for the Citizen Projet, and it wins hands down on every possible count, except price. It costs a massive £659 excluding VAT – more expensive than many laser printers!

The most impressive thing about this printer must be its print speed. In draft mode, it positively sears the page with a blistering 550 characters per second. That's six and a quarter pages per minute; most cheaper lasers aren't that fast!

When we tested this printer, it took us a measly one minute and 28 seconds to print a full screen from *Deluxe Paint* at a resolution of 360x360dpi. If you haven't got the message yet, this is a seriously fast printer.

It comes supplied with a tractor feed for continuous stationery, but unfortunately doesn't include an automatic sheet feeder as standard, although you can add one later if you like. I felt that this was quite a serious ommission considering the printer's price.

With a RAM buffer of 128k as standard, you can download most screens to it in a single hit, and even DTP pages will be much faster to output.

It comes with a generous selection of nine typefaces and these can be further upgraded as can the memory. The ink cartridges are reasonably priced at £29 for a cartridge with a six million character lifespan.

Obviously this printer is not aimed at the home user. It would seem to be ideally suited to people whose primary requirement is the fast, quiet printing of lots of text.

Available from: Epson UK, Campus 100, Marylands Avenue, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 7EZ. Tel: 0442 61144.
Price: £659 (ex VAT).

94%



The Epson SQ870 offers an impressive print speed and is a winner in almost every area.

How they compare

MODEL	LX100	LC200	FX870	LC100C	LC24-20II	SWIFT 90
MANUFACTURER	EPSON	STAR	EPSON	STAR	STAR	CITIZEN
TYPE	DOT MATRIX	DOT MATRIX	DOT MATRIX	DOT MATRIX	DOT MATRIX	DOT MATRIX
COLOUR	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	OPTIONAL
RESOLUTION*	216X180	240X216	240X216	240X216	360X360	216X144
PINS/NOZZLES	9	9	9	9	24	9
DRIVER USED	EPSON X	EPSON X	EPSON X	EPSON X	EPSON Q	EPSON Q
PRINT SPEED IN CPS (DRAFT)	200	200	380	150	167	240
PRINT SPEED IN CPS (NLQ)	40	37.5	57	37.5	55.6	45
PRINT SPEED IN MINUTES (SCREEN)	26.50	27.39	2.48	26.5	4.47	5.32
TYPEFACES	3	6	3	5	7	7
PITCH	10, 12, 17, 20	10, 12, 15, 17, 20	10, 12, 17, 20	10, 12, 17,20	10, 12, 15, 17, 20	10, 12, 15, 17.1, 20
SET-UP**	E.D.S	E.D.S	D.I.P	E.D.S.	E.D.S	E.D.S.
MEMORY	4K	16K	24K	2K	30K	8K
INTERFACE	PARALLEL	PARALLEL	PARALLEL	PARALLEL	PARALLEL	PARALLEL
PRICE (EXCLUDING VAT)***	£189	£259	£429	£219	£299	£199
RIBBON/CART LIFE	3,000,000 CHARACTERS	1-3,000,000 CHARACTERS	3,000,000 CHARACTERS	1,000,000 CHARACTERS	2,000,000 CHARACTERS	2,000,000 CHARACTERS
RIBBON/CARTRIDGE/TONER PRICE (EX VAT)	£4.95	£5.50	£5	£4	£5	£2.90
COLOUR RIBBON PRICE (EX VAT)	N/A	£11.00	N/A	£6	N/A	£15
PAPER CAPACITY	50	1	1	1	1	1
SHEET FEEDER	YES	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL
CONTINUOUS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SINGLE SHEET	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
HEIGHT (CM)	13	13.5	15.4	12	15	13.6
WIDTH (CM)	37.5	44.0	46	39.6	44	40.5
DEPTH (CM)	25.2	33.4	38	30.1	33	32
WEIGHT (KILOS)	4.5	6.3	6.8	5.3	6.4	5.2
NOISE (DECIBELS)	>45	52-54	>45	<54	53.5-54.5	45-47.5
OPTIONS		SHEET FEEDER SERIAL INTERFACE ROLL PAPER HOLDER	SHEET FEEDER TRACTOR FEEDER SERIAL INTERFACE ROLL PAPER HOLDER	SHEET FEEDER SERIAL INTERFACE	SHEET FEEDER SERIAL INTERFACE TRACTOR FEEDER FONT CARD RAM CARDS	SERIAL PORT COLOUR KIT SHEET FEEDER PRINTER STAND

OKI OL400E

The OL400E is an LED printer, a close relative to the laser printer. The main advantage of LED printing is that it doesn't emit ozone depleting gases as laser printing does.

The OL400E produces no such harmful substances, and consequently the entire mechanism is considerably smaller than that of its better-known relatives.

Unlike the other devices reviewed here, the OL400E is a page printer – that means that it prints a whole page rather than a line at a time. It can manage four pages per minute, which is equivalent to about 352 characters per second. Even a full *Deluxe Paint* screen only took one minute and six seconds to print from start to finish, and duplicates of the same screen only took 15 seconds each.

The OL400 only comes with 512K which isn't very much for a laser-type printer. However, it uses a special Reduced Instruction Set Chip (RISC) to enhance the way that graphics are handled. This means that, unlike other page printers, 512K is perfectly adequate for a full A4 page of graphics.

Unusually for this sort of printer, it only comes with four typefaces, although these are very attractive when printed.

Overall, the OL400E produces crisp, visually pleasing print. It's by far the cheapest printer to run with replacement toner cartridges only costing £17.99. Considering the fact that they last for about 1500-2000 pages (about 7,920,000-10,560,000 characters), it really is a great machine for the professional on a budget.

Available from: Oki Systems (UK) Ltd, 550 Dundee Road, Slough, Berks, SL1 4JY. Tel: 0753 819819. Price: £499.

95%



The Oki OL400E can print at a rate of four pages per minute and is ideal for professional printing on a tight budget.

SWIFT 240C	PN48	DICONIX 180SI	DICONIX 701	PROJET	SQ870	OL400E
CITIZEN	CITIZEN	KODAK	KODAK	CITIZEN	EPSON	OKI
DOT MATRIX	THERMAL	INKJET	INKJET	BUBBLE JET	INK JET	LED
YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
360X360	360X360	192X192	300X300	300X300	360X360	300X300
24	48	12	50	50	48	N/A
EPSON Q	EPSON Q	EPSON X	HP DESKJET	HP DESKJET	EPSON Q	HP LASERJET 2
215	53	145	200	360	550	4PPM
66	53	29	120	120	200	4PPM
1.38	5.15	6.41	3.45	2.06	1.28	1.06
7	2	3	3	4	9	4
10, 12, 15, 17.1, 20	10, 12, 15, 17.14, 20	10, 12, 17.2	10, 12, 16.67, 20	5, 10, 16.6, 20	10, 12, 15, 17, 20	10, 12, 16.66
E.D.S.	D.I.P.	ON-LINE	ON-LINE	E.D.S.	E.D.S.	E.D.S.
8K	4K	2K	24K	8K	16-128K	512K
PARALLEL	PARALLEL	PARALLEL OR SERIAL	PARALLEL	PARALLEL	PARALLEL	PARALLEL AND SERIAL
£359	£325	£270	£399	£496	£659	£499
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£15	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	1	1	30	150	1	100
OPTIONAL	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES
YES	NO	YES	NO	OPTIONAL	YES	NO
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
13.6	5	5.08	6.1	14.7	20.5	16
40.5	29.7	27.4	29.7	42.5	49.2	32
32	9	16.4	19.5	45	32.5	36
5.2	0.97	1.3	2.5	9	9.5	8
43-46.5	49	45	<45	47	<49	<45
SERIAL INTERFACE RAM CARDS SHEET FEEDER	BATTERY CAR ADAPTOR	BATTERY	BATTERY	TRACTOR FEEDER FONT CARDS RAM CARDS	SHEET FEEDER PAPER BIN FONT CARDS SERIAL INTERFACE TRACTOR FEED	RAM CARD FONT CARDS PAPER BIN

*Resolution indicates maximum known resolution of printer. However, this figure is often higher than the actual resolution due to limitations in the driver used.

** DIP = Dual Inline Processor (usually micro-switches somewhere on printer). EDS = Electronic DIP Switches. The same function as DIP switches but electronically activated via printer's control panel. On-Line means that all settings are specified by printing lists onto paper and selecting required options.

*** Retail prices indicated. Street prices are likely to be substantially lower than those given here.



THE WORLDS MOST POWERFU

JUST LOOK AT THE UNMATCHED RANGE OF FEATURES

SAVE THE ENTIRE PROGRAM IN MEMORY TO DISK
Special compacting techniques enable up to 3 programs to fit on one disk. Now saves directly to disk as Amiga Dos - reloads independently of the cartridge - even transfer to hard drive! Works with up to 2 Megs of Ram - even 1 Meg Chip Mem (Fatter Agnus).

NEW **SUPER POWERFUL TRAINER MODE-**
now with DEEP trainer. Even better than before - allows you to generate more or even infinite lives, fuel, ammo. Perfect as a Trainer Mode to get you past that "impossible" level. Easy to use.

IMPROVED SPRITE EDITOR
The full Sprite Editor allows you to view/modify the whole sprite set including any "attached" sprites. PLUS A RANGE OF IMPROVED FEATURES.

VIRUS DETECTION
Comprehensive virus detection and removal features to protect your software investment. Works with all presently known viruses.

NEW **BURST NIBBLER**
Now this super disk copier program is built into Action Replay Mk III. Just imagine a superfast, efficient disk copier program at the press of a key - no more waiting.

SAVE PICTURES AND MUSIC TO DISK
Pictures and sound samples can be saved to disk. Files are saved directly in IFF format suitable for use with all the major graphic and music packages. Samples are displayed as screen waveform.

NEW **PAL or NTSC MODES SELECTABLE-**
Useful for removing ugly borders when using NTSC software. (Works only with newer Agnus chips).

NEW **SLOW MOTION MODE**
Now you can slow down the action to your own pace. Easily adjustable from full speed to 20% speed. Ideal to help you through the tricky parts!

MANY MORE INSTANT CLI COMMANDS-
like Rename, Relabel, Copy, etc.

NEW **RESTART THE PROGRAM**
Simply press a key and the program will continue where you left off.

FULL STATUS REPORTING
At the press of a key now you can view the Machine Status, including Fast Ram, Chip Ram, RamDisk, Drive Status, etc.

POWERFUL PICTURE EDITOR
Now you can manipulate and search for screens throughout memory. Over 50 commands to edit the picture plus unique on screen status "overlay" shows all the information you could ever need to work on screens. No other product comes close to offering such dynamic screen handling of frozen programs!!

JOYSTICK HANDLER-
allows the user to select Joystick instead of Keypresses - very useful for many keyboard programs.

MUSIC SOUND TRACKER
With Sound Tracker you can find the complete music in programs, demos, etc. and save them to disk. Saves in format suitable for most track player programs. Works with loads of programs!!



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FREEZER-UTILITY CARTRIDGE

AUTOFIRE MANAGER
From the Action Replay III preference screen you can now set up autofire from 0 to 100%. Just imagine continuous fire power! Joystick 1 and 2 are set separately for that extra advantage!

NEW **IMPROVED RAM EXPANSION SUPPORT**
Now many more external Ram Expansions will work with all Action Replay III commands.

DISKCODER
With the new "Diskcoder" option you can now 'tag' your disks with a unique code that will prevent the disk from being loaded by anyone else. "Tagged" disks will only reload when you enter the code. Very useful for security.

NEW **SET MAP-**
allows you to Load/Save/Edit a Keymap.

PREFERENCES
Action Replay III now has screen colour preferences with menu setup. Customise your screens to suit your taste. Very simple to use.

DISK MONITOR
Invaluable disk monitor - displays disk information in easy to understand format. Full modify/save options.

IMPROVED PRINTER SUPPORT-
including compressed/small character command.

NEW **DOS COMMANDS**
Now you have a selection of DOS commands available at all times - DIR, FORMAT, COPY, DEVICE, etc.

NEW **FILE REQUESTER-**
if you enter a command without a filename, then a file requestor is displayed.

DISK COPY
Disk Copy at the press of a button - faster than Dos Copy. No need to load workbench - available at all times.

PLUS IMPROVED DEBUGGER COMMANDS-
including Mem Watch Points and Trace.

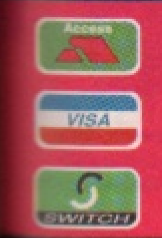
NEW **BOOT SELECTOR**
Either DFO or DF1 can be selected as the boot drive when working with Amiga Dos disks. Very useful to be able to boot from your external drive.

PLUS A MACHINE CODE FREEZER MONITOR WITH EVEN MORE POWER!!

EVEN MORE FEATURES INCLUDING 80 COLUMN DISPLAY AND 2 WAY SCROLLING:-

- Full M68000 Assembler/Disassembler
- Full screen editor
- Load/Save block
- Write String to memory
- Jump to specific address
- Show Ram as text
- Show frozen picture
- Play resident sample
- Show and edit all CPU registers and flag
- Calculator
- Help command
- Full search feature
- Unique Custom Chip Editor allows you to see and modify all chip registers - even write only registers
- Notepad
- Disk handling - show actual track, Disk Sync. pattern etc.
- Dynamic Breakpoint handling
- Show memory as HEX, ASCII, Assembler, Decimal
- Copper Assemble/Disassemble - now with suffix names

REMEMBER AT ALL TIMES YOU ARE INTERROGATING THE PROGRAM IN IT'S "FROZEN" STATE WITH ALL MEMORY AND REGISTERS INTACT - INVALUABLE FOR THE DE-BUGGER OR JUST THE INQUISITIVE!



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Amiga-specific art reaches new heights in this month's edition of Art Gallery. From Megadeth T-Shirt designs to WWI Biplanes, we've got the lot.

GO TO HELL First up on the rostrum this month is a piece inspired by a Megadeth T-Shirt (by Edward J. Repka). This version, drawn by Stewart Carey, was done in DPaint II and III.



1 First was the head. The left horn was drawn and flipped horizontally, then modified to get away from the symmetrical look.

2 Next, Stewart made a start on the body, arm, wing and part of the trident. He thought that the jaw wasn't quite right so cut it out and shortened it.

3 Shading was added now using both freehand and fill techniques.

4 The palette was changed from 8 to 16 colours in order to allow more colours to be used in the dark parts of the jacket. The remaining arm and leg were also added at this stage.

5 The tail was started next and drawn freehand and filled using the darkest brown available. Tiny details were added by getting up close with the magnify tool and then using some different shading.

6 Stewart changed to *DPaint II* so that he had enough memory for a spare screen to draw the background and merge it with the main image. The demon was cut out and made into a single colour.



7 The foreground and background are merged and Victor Rattlehead is complete.

ART FOR ART'S SAKE

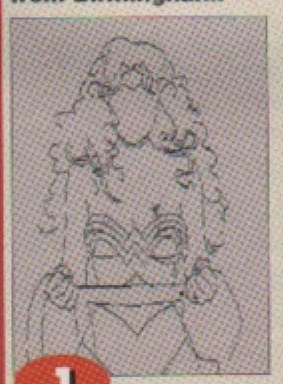
If you've spent hours at home designing a masterpiece and you think that the rest of the world should be allowed to see just what an ace artist you are send it to us. We'll pass it on to our resident art critic who'll decide whether it's worthy of inclusion in the CU gallery.

Please bear in mind the following points when you send that disk in:

- As well as the finished picture include at least four other iff files showing it in various stages of construction.
- Include a stage-by-stage description of how you did it on a separate piece of paper even if you include a doc file on disk.
- If you copied/redrew your picture from another source please supply full details of the other artist, the name of the picture and where it appeared.
- All disks will be retained by CU Amiga so don't bother to send a SAE in 'cos we'll probably just throw it in the bin.
- Some nasty post offices actually pass suspicious looking parcels through x-ray machines. This can have an adverse effect on your disks. To prevent this write 'Magnetic media – Do not x-ray' on both sides of the envelope.

A copy of the magazine in which your art appeared will be sent to the featured artists, but only if we have your name and address. Send your disks to: CU Amiga, Art Gallery, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

WONDER WOMAN Comic art hasn't always been recognised as high art. Fortunately, we always recognise talent when we see it. Here's a copy of a comic book cover drawn by Samantha Robinson from Birmingham.



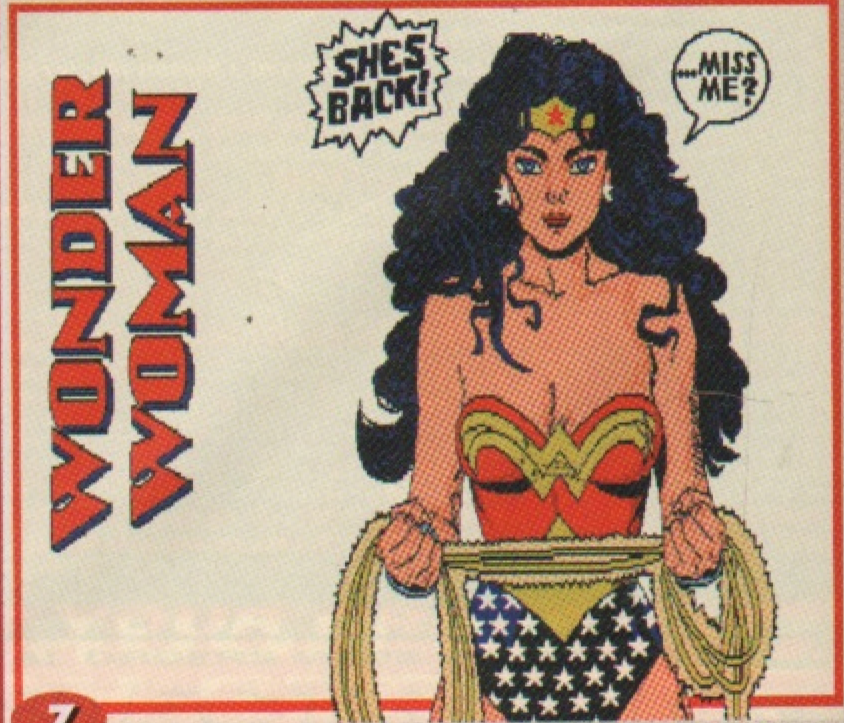
1 She started out by tracing the original cover onto cellophane and then re-tracing it onto a medium res screen. At the same time some basic colours were chosen for the palette.



2 The outline was sealed so that filling could begin and the lasso was added. The hair was the first area to be filled using a base of blue with black providing the details of the curls.



3 The lasso came in for the same treatment, making sure that the outline was sealed. The glow surrounding it, Wonder Woman's pants, bodice, headband and belt were tackled at the same time.



7 The background was fixed so that it wouldn't overdraw Wonder Woman. But Samantha had to unfix it to add the speech bubbles and the freehand lettering.

HEAVEN II AD Nice legs, shame about the.... This pretty picture was painted by Aidan Doolan. Unfortunately, Aidan didn't supply us with any details as to how he achieved this result but we liked it so much that we decided to include it anyway.



4 The shading was created using a darker flesh colour plus some dotted black lines for a deeper tone. One single star was drawn and turned into a brush to stamp over the relevant parts of the costume.



5 Samantha then mixed a dark red for the bodice and tunic and shaded them in. The process was repeated for the belt and chest logos as well. She decided to change the base colour of the flesh slightly.



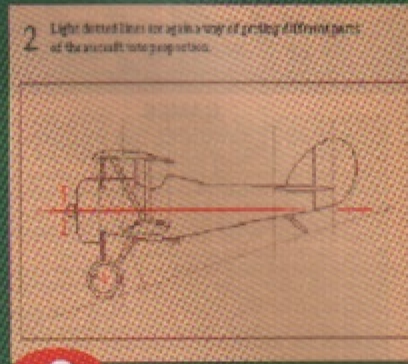
6 Samantha copied half a face from a brochure and resized it, changed the eyes and did a horizontal flip to create a whole face. The head was stamped onto the body and the colours blended to achieve a good mix.



8 The whole thing was finished by the addition of the D.C. logo, created using the circle and text tools, and the main title, drawn freehand and using the elastic lines/curves tool.

ANCIENT ART OF WAR The final sequence from this month's batch comes from Danny Spain who lives in Buckhurst Hill, Essex. It's a Nieuport 17 Biplane, taken from a book called War Machine, and was drawn in DPaint III.

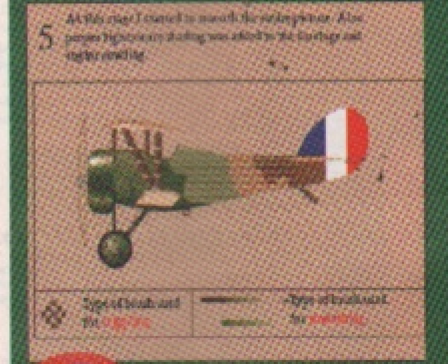
1 The first step was to draw a centreline, in red, so that everything could be kept in proportion. Danny then got to work on the fuselage, and propeller shaft using the straight line and curve tools.



2 The top, bottom and tail wing were added using the curve tool. Danny decided that he needed a few perspective lines to keep everything in proportion so put in some dotted ones in a light, unobtrusive colour.

3 The basic palette was chosen. This was made easier by filling the box in a different colour to the background, setting up a stencil, and locking the outline and background colour.

4 Fine details were put on the fuselage and the smooth and blend functions were used to add shading. The RAF insignia was designed using the unfilled circle tool and rotated back.



5 The main body was smoothed more and the wings were filled and shaped. To add extra realism a light source was put on the engine cowling.



6 The propeller was drawn now from memory. It was particularly difficult to achieve a smooth curve on it and avoid the jaggies. These were eliminated by using mid-range colours to fill in the jags. The RAF insignia on the bottom wing was made by stretching the one designed earlier and then smoothing it.



7 At this final stage Danny added strengthening cords for the wings and rudder. The RAF insignia and squadron markings were added to the tail and fuselage and the whole thing was rounded off by a frame.



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GAMES

PG003 AIR WARRIOR Good flight Sim + (not A600!)
PG006 ANTEP & SLOT CARS role playing game+ Y
PG021 ATIC ATAC Really playable game! + Y
PG026 CASTLE OF DOOM Excellent! Get it + Y
PG028 COLOSSUS & WORLD Fab adventures !+ Y
PG029 CROSSWORD COMPILER As it says !+ Y
PG032 DRAGONS CAVE D&D style game Mega+ Y
PG034 ETERNAL ROME Strategy & DOMINOES+ Y
PG046 HACK Great text adventure-infocom style! + Y
PG047 HOLLYWOOD TRIVIA Nice Trivia Game! +
PG048 HOLY GRAIL One of the best Text adventures+ Y
PG053 LARN A superb text adventure game + Y
PG059 LORE OF CONQUEST space trading D&D game Y
PG062 MENTAL IMAGE 1 Gridrunner Invaders & rebound+
PG063 MORIA Adventure now version 5.4! +Y
PG068 NO MANS LAND Hi tech war game-shoot em up. +Y
PG071 POM POM GUNNER Like beach-head on the 64+Y
PG072 PROPERTY MARKET Become a millionaire !!!
PG074 RETURN TO EARTH Elite space trading game! +Y
PG079 SEALANCE A submarine strategy game +Y
PG094 TRAIN CONSTRUCTION KIT make own tracks+Y
PG101 THE INSIDERS CLUB Stocks & shares game
PG110 SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE Nice car racegame!+Y
PG121 A500+ GAMES PACK 21 games to run on a plus+Y
PG127 AIRMANIA Super platform game from Adware + Y
PG139 DUNGEONS OF MADROJ Excellent D&D game+Y
PG140 MIND GAMES Stacks of fun with this !Y
PG153 WAR very good strategy/arcade game+Y
PG164 GAME TAMER 2.3 joystick tester & 268 cheats+Y
PG174 AMOS CRICKET Shareware cricket game,1 or 2plr+
PG175 SPACETRAX 2 player shoot each other up game+Y
PG178 MENTAL IMAGE 2 Three Excellent new games +
PG181 STRIKEBALL Baseball type game done in Amos +Y
PG182 ETHOS Simple graphical adventure Sinbad style+Y
PG183 CATACOMBS great D&D style game. VG.GFX +Y
PG184 FATAL MISSION Very good Shootemup game +
PG189 SPACE RESCUE Super scramble like shoot em up!+
PG190 TOP SECRET An exellent quality platform game!+
PG191 ACT OF WAR New space strategy game! +Y
PG199 CASHFRUIT Nice fruit machine game! +Y
PG200 ALL ROUNDER CRICKET New cricket game!+Y
PG202/3 IRON CLADS Good strategic war game!(2)Y
PG204 THRALLBOUND Text adventure with graphics!+Y
PG205 SOCCER CARDS Football managing game!+Y
PG214 LEGEND OF LOTHIAN Superb Ultima type game!!+Y
PG218/9 CLASH OF THE EMPIRES Super strategy!+ Y
PG220 MICROMARKET V1.1 Good stock& shares game! +Y
PG221 OXYD Roll marble to different stations! + Y
PG226 3D GAMES 3 games done in 3d construction+Y
PG227 IMP WALKER 3d walker shoot em up & more +Y
PG242 MR & MRS Great platform adventure game! +Y
PG243 NIRVANA Cute speccy type platform game!
PG244 NUMERIX Very nice puzzle type game! +Y
PG247 PICTURE TILES Nice picture puzzle game +Y
PG248 WILLY IN CASTLE OF DREAMS Fab platformer!+Y
PG249 LEEDINGS 5 level demo shareware game!+Y
PG250 FRUIT SALAD Very nice platform game! + Y

ASSASSINS GAMES PACKS!

The best selection of PD games ever assembled anywhere now all autoboot on A1200! (though not all games will run)Something for everyone!

ASI 1 Tanx, Rollerpede, Avatris Amigoids etc!+
ASI 2 Invaders,Bally 2,Missile command etc!+
ASI 3 Megaball & Drip Superb gamepack! +Y
ASI 4 Frogger Go Moku,Cracker Jumpy etc!+
ASI 5 Raid, Go Looly & Retaliator+Y
ASI 6 Pacman Downhillchallenge Welltrix etc!+
ASI 7 Moonbase, Trix,Nightworks Clauderunner!+
ASI 8 Airace2,Hball,Snakepit & Numberfumbler!+
ASI 9 Features Battle pong & Blizzard! + Y
ASI 10 Escape, Pipeline, Pickout & Sys!+
ASI 11 Dad, Connex,Reversi Towers & Trippin+
ASI 12 Llamatron, Car, Powerpong, XFI. Fab!+
ASI 13 Twintris, Squamble,Block it,Ball etc!+
ASI 14 ChinaChallenge2 & Amiga Columns!+
ASI 15 Battlecars Lettrix & Mambamove!Y
ASI 16 Wastelands, Mission X,Dellemna,Pacman +Y
ASI 17 Tomcat, Defenda, Jetman Bugblaster+
ASI 18 Henry in Panic Skyflyer Omega race!+ Y
ASI 19 Growth,FranticFreddy,Biplane & more!+
ASI 20 Microbes Hollywood trivia Coin drop +
ASI 21 Zeus Tettrix Battlements & Dragontiles+Y
ASI 22 Lemmingoids,Wizzys quest Duel Mouthman+Y
ASI 23 Quick money,BIP,Interferon Arcadia+
ASI 24 Revenge of camels Dux Croak 3dmaze etc!+
ASI 25 Mr Brick,Copper,hemeroids,E Type+
ASI 26 Superpacman 92 Smashtv Ashido System 4etc+
ASI 27 Addictive card games. Really good!+Y
ASI 28 Doody, DrMario, Invaders2, Madbomber2+
ASI 29 DOG, Rome, Nova, B-Bal, Atax, Quadrix+
ASI 30 Bounce & Blast, Total Fire Tank attack!+
ASI 31 Arazmaz,Crazy pipe, revolution etc!+
ASI 32 Blob, Sector one & Firefighter! +
ASI 33 Hyperball & War! 2 good games+
ASI 34 Trailblazer, Yelp, Qbic Rushour! +
ASI 35 Poing,Snakepit,Cybernetix Jump n roll!+Y
ASI 36 Mother lode, Wonderland, Kong Tactix!+
ASI 37 Klaktris, Ghostship, Paccer etc!+
ASI 38 One on One,Baldy,Skyflyer2,Transplant!
ASI 39 Lots of card games on this disk! +
ASI 40 Disk full of sliding puzzle games!+Y
ASI 41 Pacman deluxe, Hellzone Leap II etc+
ASI 42 Galaga, Intuder alert Dogs in space!+
ASI 43 Interlock Roulette Octothello etc!+
ASI 44 Nibbler,Mouse Impossible,Roll on etc+
ASI 45 Dris,Paccheese,B-Castle Teserae etc+
ASI 46 Amiga Q, City,Checkers, Ouch etc! + Y
ASI 47 Elevation, Furmyre,Crave,Arena! + Y
ASI 48 Point to point,Psycho santa etc! +Y
ASI 49 Deathbringer in space Sue 1+2 etc!+Y
ASI 50 Euphorion,Roach Motel,Balders grove! +Y
ASI 51 Lamers, Fighting Warrior Shapes! +Y
ASI 52 Rockslide, Mouthman, & Nu! +
ASI 53 Venus Invaders,Mastermind etc! + Y
ASI 54 Serene,Serene II & Car Wars! + Y
ASI 55 Cli-tris, Pacatac & Asteroids! + Y
ASI 56 Stormeagle, Extreme Violence & Tiles!+Y
ASI 57 Poo-poo Dominoes Dizzy diamonds Squirm+Y
ASI 58 Super raid 4 Magnatron & Maiessae!+Y
ASI 59 Turbo thrust GX200 & Leedings! +Y
ASI 60 Pipe master2 Alien Hunter & Checkers! +Y
ASI 61 Rattlesnake Running Chaser Scud blaster+Y
ASI 62 Pipeline2 Mazeman & Up and Down ! +Y
ASI 63 Nautilus Frenzy & Drive It!! +Y
ASI 64 Oblivion(fab!) Breakout con kit etc! +Y
ASI 65 Paranoids Chess Word Puzzle Word search+Y
ASI 66 Cow wars Asmastermind & Asokoban! +Y

Assassins game packs made up in any numbers you require: eg ASI 1-35 only 34.95 inc P&P!!! FUNPACK GAMES PACK 1-35 only 34.95 inc P&P!!! (most run on Amiga 1200!)

EDUCATION

PE001/5 EDUCATION SET science programs for ags 11+ +Y
PE006 KIDSPAINT Fab little talking colouring book+Y
PE007/8 LEARN & PLAY Maths, spelling etc. 5-10 yrs +Y
PE009 STORYLAND 2 Save toyland from the witch! +Y
PE010 TOTAL CONCEPTS ASTRONOMY Book on disk.+Y
PE011 TOTAL CONCEPTS DINOSAURS Book on a disk+Y
PE013 SIMON & SPACE MATHS Talking maths program
PE014 SPANISH, FRENCH, GERMAN TUTOR+Not 600!
PE015 TREASURE SEARCH find the lost treasure ! +Y
PE016 COLOUR THE ALPHABET learn letters & colours! +Y
PE018 TYPING TUTOR, Superspell Budget & Mscalender+Y
PE019 DUNKS DTP A sort of DeskTopPublisher for kids +Y
PE020 MATHS DRILL Good maths disk for the young! +Y
PE021/4 SCIENCE Very good four disk set!+ (4)Y
PE025 FRACTIONS & SILHOUETTES Good maths tutor+ Y
PE026 WW II FACTS Good historical program!+ Y
PE027 AMIGA BEGINNER Learn to use your machine+ Y
PE028 MATHS ADVENTURE Solve questions to progress+Y
PE029 LEXCESS Simple but fun hangman style game+
PE030/2 DESKTOP GUIDE TO ELECTRONIC MUSIC! +Y
PE033 MATCH WITH HUMPTY Match the objects! + Y

BUSINESS

PB001 AMICASH bank management program+Y
PB002/3 ANALYTICALC Superb spreadsheet!+ (2)Y
PB004 ASI LABEL PRINTERS 3 of the best+Y
PB005 BANKIN control your cheque book! +Y
PB006 BUSINESS CARD MAKER Nice program+
PB007 CLERK Complete accounts package+Y
PB008 DESKTOP PUBLISHER Simple to use +Y
PB009 FLEXYBASE DATABASE Address keeper+Y
PB011 MISC.BUSINESS Geotime, Grocery list, Calc
PB013 QED Simple & effective text ed+Y
PB014 RIM DATABASE Fully relational !!+Y
PB015 TEXTPLUS V3.00 The BEST Wordprocessor +Y
PB017 VISICALC SPREADSHEET Simple to use+Y
PB019 BUSINESS LETTERS contracts, letters + more+Y
PB020 TEXT ENGINE 4.0 THE LATEST Version !!! +Y
PB021 AMIBASE PRO. Powerful easy to use Dbase +Y
PB022 BBASE II v5.5 A fast & easy to use database+Y
PB023 FORMS REALLY UNLIMITED form creation prog+Y
PB024 LAST WILL & TESTAMENTS Just in case !+Y
PB025 EDWORD Brand new wordpro - V.good +Y
PB026 AGRAPH Superb Program graphing data +Y
PB028 LITTLE OFFICE Intergrated Wpro,Sst,Dbase,Gfx+Y
PB029 ADDRESS PRINT Good label printing program! +Y
PB030 THE MONEY PROGRAM Home accounting! +Y
PB031 EASYCALC A superb new Fast spreadsheet! +Y

UTILITIES

(Note: "Y" = ok on A1200!)

PU002 A-GENE Good geneology program + Y
PU004a/b A64 EMULATOR NEW VERSION 2.0 (2)
PU005 AMATEUR RADIO 1 Interest to radio hams + Y
PU012 ASI GRAFFIX UTILS graphics convertors etc+Y
PU013 ASI BOOT UTILITIES bootblock utilities + Y
PU015 BIORYTHMS, STARCHART 2 Good programs+ Y
PU021 C-LIGHT RAY TRACER Good program+ Y
PU022 CHEMESTHETICS molecule displayer + Y
PU037 D-COPY The best PD disk copier & more + Y
PU039 DBW The foreunner to Skulpt 3D !!! + Y
PU047 DOPE INTROMAKER Make your own intros
PU048 DYNAMITE FONTS II CutNPaste fontscreens Y
PU049 DYNAMITE FONTS More CutNPaste Fonts Y
PU055 ELECTROCAD DEMO circuit designer +
PU058 FONTS AND RAM MANAGER BIG video fonts+
PU059 FONTS & SURFACES Backdrops & fonts+ Y
PU062 GRAPHICS UTILITIES Various misc. programs+Y
PU063 HAMLAB PRO V2.08Convert VGA PC >IFF/HAM+ Y
PU064 HARDDRIVE UTILS MRBackup & FixDisk & more+Y
PU065 ICONMANIA Program icons & more !+ Y
PU066 ICONS Cramm packed with icons !+ Y
PU067 IMPLODER V4.0 Megacrunching Util+ Y
PU071 JR COMM 1.02 Modem users comms package Y
PU072 METALLION UTILS Font Editors & more utils+ Y
PU073/76 KING JAMES BIBLE Old&New testaments (4)+ Y
PU078 M-CAD Hires design package. Excellent + Y
PU080 MESSY-SID 2 Read/Write PC Files, Brilliant!+ Y
PU083 MORSE PROGRAMS for the radio hams. Y
PU086/7 NORTH C 1.3 (2) Complete C compiler & libs+ Y
PU088 NORTH C 1.3 This is the packed 1 disk version!+Y
PU091 PENDLE 200 MEGAUTILS An essential collection+ Y
PU095 PRINTER DRIVER GENERATOR & new drivers+ Y
PU096 PRINTER DRIVER UTILITIES Various utils etc. Y
PU097 PRINT STUDIO V1.25 Prints pics & text etc.+ Y
PU108 ROT A simple 3D drawing package.Very popular.+Y
PU109/10 (2 disk) Structured clipart for Ppage + Y
PU112/3 SOMETHING FOR NOTHIN Video Utils&Fonts+ Y
PU115 ST EMULATOR Run Atari ST software !! 2 Drives
PU117 SUPERKILLERS Virus Killers! You need this! +
PU121/2 TV GRAPHICS Dpaint backdrops&Fonts+(2) Y
PU124 ULTIMATE ICONS Iconmaster,Iconlab,+ Y
PU129/30 VIDEO APPLICATIONS Video utilities+ Y
PU136 ZX SPECTRUM EMULATOR Now with sound +
PU139 GRAPHICS CONVERTERS PC>AMigagfx Converter
PU140 LITTLEBENCH File copier & utils Dos2 only
PU143 OPTIUTILS 1 Crammed full ! Get it+ Y
PU144 OPTIUTILS 2 Get this disk too ! + Y
PU145 OPTICOMMS 1 Ncomm 1.921 Lharca, Zoo Arc+ Y
PU149 ELECTRONIC PROTOTYPER Veroboard designer Y
PU152/66 CLIPART SET: 15 Disks of the BEST clipart +Y
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ANIMATIONS

PA033 BUSY BEE & TREE FROG ANIMS Super anims! +Y
PA036 CX1 SPACESHIP Spaceship circles a globe!+Y
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PA039 ERIC-S AMY VS WALKER Cute & sexy! 1.5M Y
PA040 ERIC-S BATMAN vs JOKER Very funny!!!+Y
PA042 ERIC-S COYOTE STRIKES BACK 1mg too! +
PA043 ERIC-S MORE AEROTOONS Very witty !!!+ Y
PA045 ERIC-S STEALTHY II Mig-29 vs Stealthy !+Y
PA053/4 LIGHT CYCLES (2) Tron animation+
PA056 MAGICIAN II Good RT animation+Y
PA060 NEWTONS CRADLE plus F19 & rocking chair+Y
PA072 THE JUGGLER A classic amiga demo!+ Y
PA074 THE WALKER vs The Helicopter - Mega !+ Y
PA075 THE WALKER vs A2000 A classic ! + Y
PA085 JET ANIMATION Fractal Flight but better! +Y
PA086 FRACTAL ANIMATION full screen low flying anim+Y
PA091/3 GAS TURBINE, STEAM & PETROL ENGINE (3)+Y
PA094 AMY JOGS,WALKS & SNEEZES by E Schwartz! +Y
PA095 HOW TO RUN INTO A WALL by Eric Schwartz! +Y
PA097 SMALL STATION AT KHERNE New 1mg version+Y
PA099 ATF AGILITY new ES anim, very witty as usual+Y
PA100 VTOL CONTEST Check out this new ES anim ! +Y
PA101 DOLPHIN DREAMS Great Dolphin anim! + Y
PA103/4 KINGFISHER 2 Superb bird animations!+ Y
PA106/7 THE JOURNEY Fab fractal pics & anims(2)+Y
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PA120 TWO STROKE PETROL ENGINE Super anim+Y
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PA121 BOAT ANIM Colourful anim,fast on 1200!+Y
PA122/3 THUNDERBIRDS ANIM Nice animation! (2)+Y
PA124 ANIM COMP 10 mini animations compilation! +Y

AGATRON

AGA01 RED LOTUS Spinning down the road. Fantastic !+Y
AGA03 STAR TREK - Shuttle fly past - Great ! 1m +Y
AGA09 STAR WARS - Fighter fly by, impressive 1m +Y
AGA10 STAR TREK - Enterprise in dry dock. Incredible+Y
AGA23 FLEET MANOEVRE Stunning animation! 1m +Y
AGA24 KULI PEN animation & Ping pong. Great! 1m +Y
AGA25 THE RUN , a superb car chase 1mg +Y
AGA31 PORSCHE anim rising out of table 1 mg. +Y
AGA35 SPACE PROBE, great anim of probe zooming off!+Y
AGA36 BIRD OF PREY, loop the loop animation 1m +Y
AGA37 TOBIAS GOES KNACKERS -Check this out ! 1m +Y
AGA38 TOTALLY WICKED ! Shuttle & Enterprise (2 MEG)|Y
AGA39/53 AGATRON SPECIAL! Yes, a 15 disk anim!+Y
AGA54/62 AGATRON SPECIAL! a 9 disk anim, fans only+Y

POWERANIMS

PP001/2 ANTI LEMMINGS (2) This is Brilliant! 2M
PP003 AT THE MOVIES Cute anim of Amy squirrel 1.5M+Y
PP008/10 BUZZED (3) Great anim of wasp crashing! 2M
PP011/12 DATING GAME (2) Very witty!, Get it. 3.5M!
PP016 GULF WAR Another ES production! Good 2M! Y
PP021/24 LANDING (4) Tobias Richter poweranim 4M!
PP025/27 STATION AT KHARN (3) Incredible 2M demo Y
PP040/43 AT THE MOVIES II (4) Hilarious ! 1mg>3mg
PP044/45 AMY V WALKER II (2) Another witty ES demo 3M
PP046 SWEET REVENGE Coyote vs Roadrunner ! 1.5mg+Y
PP050 UNSPORTING Wicked aerotoon by Schwartz+ 2M Y
PP051/2 CHARLY CAT Super Shwartzlike cartoon! 2mg.Y
PP053/4 CHARLY CAT AT THE BEACH 2nd fab anim 2mg!Y
PP055/6 APC MISSION Superb walker & tank battle 3mg!
PP057/9 CHARLY CAT CATCHES A CANARY Fab! 3MG.
PP060/3 CHARLY CAT MOUSTERMIND Great! 3.5MG.
PP064 DUNCAN DUNG BEETLE Unusual 2mg animation! Y
PP065/6 CHARLY CAT SNOWJOKE Latest anim 2mg.+ Y
PP067/9 SPEED LIMIT 3mg motorcycle race! + Y (3)
PP070/1 LEMMINGS REVENGE Very amusing anim! 2mg Y
PP072/3 TALES OF A TIME TRAVELLER Super movie 3mg!
PP074/6 G.I. SPY 3mg anim from charlie cat author! (3)
PP077/84 THE HAUNTED Tremendous animation,3mg!(8)
PP085/7 THE AD Strange swartzlike animation! 3mg (3)
PP088/9 SPORTING DOO DOO Nice new animation! 2mg(2)
PP090/1 ROADHOG ANIM Very funny 2mg animation!(2)Y

DEMOS

PD005 AMOS 3D DEMO Shows some great effects!+ Y
PD018 CHAOS ROCK Fab light show with fractals!+
PD076 PLASMUTEX Wild copper & plasma effects!+
PD068 PHENOMENA ENIGMA Absolutely brilliant!+ Y
PD130/34 ALCATRAZ ODDESSY Awesome!! Ok on
PD154 DECAY GET FROGGED Fab dancing frog! +
PD159 ANARCHY IN THE KITCHEN Some good FX
PD164 DESIRE MENACE Good Psycho rave demo
PD165 DARK DEMON Mega new demo .... get it+ Y
PD170 PIECE OF MIND Good 3D vector effects. +
PD171/2 SILENTS EXPOSE(2) Incredible Get it !+ Y
PD177/8 TRSI TIME ZONE New, some good effects
PD181 CINEMORPH Fab morphing of 4 faces! 1m
PD182 SPACEBALL Absolutely brill,needs 1meg ch
PD183 DIGITAL LETHAL EXIT Good vectors demo!
PD184 ANDROMEDA MINDRIOT Very good vector
PD185/6 ANDROMEDA MIRROR Fab Music & Gra

MUSIC DISKS

PM001 100 GREATEST 64 TUNES 100 fab 64 tune
PM010 AMEGA PARTY WINNERS Four WICKED
PM012 AMIGADEUS CLASSICAL Eine Kleiner etc. +
PM022/23 CLASSICAL MUSIC Bach, Handel etc +Y
PM027 D-MOB MUSIC 3 House music remix, good! +
PM030/34 DIGITAL CONCERTs 2-6 Excellent house
PM035 DIGITAL DEBUSSY Fab Rob Baxter conve
PM036 DIGITAL DEBUSSYII classic Debussy music
PM058 MAG FIELDS CHIP FESTIVAL Full of chip mu
PM059 MANIACS OF NOISE This is brilliant!+
PM082a/82b VIVALDI - FOUR SEASONS (2) V.Good
PM090/91MOZART HORN CONCERTO 4 by H.Ga
PM092 PIANO TUNES Nine piano songs- good + Y
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PM167/8 JESUS ON ES Crazy rave music demo! +
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PM170/2 LUNATICS INFINITE DREAMS Great mus
PM173 CDTV MUSIC Super graphics & sound, 8 tra

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PS056 NEWTEK DYNAMIC HAM 640x512 4096 col
PS062 NW DYNAMIC HAM Nik Williams Superb qu
PS072 SUPER HAM CARS This is a must-Mega!+ Y
PS086 SONIC 5 Superb D-HAM 4096 colour pics+
PS103 DYNAMIC HIRES 2, 4 fantastic quality picture
PS107 ALCATRAZ MUSEUM 18 super quality draw
PS112/3 SEALIFE PICS Superb undersea pictures!+
PS114 GRAFIX VOL1 Nice hand drawn pictures!+Y

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PT011 KAWAI K1 editor for patch changes!
PT012 KAWAI K4 editor as above!
PT013 MED 3.2 Excellent music seq. + Y
PT015 MIDI DISK Various midi stuff +
PT020 ST-01 - ST-10 Samples--Ring for details
PT021 SOUNDTRACKER 2.6 Excellent, ok plus!+Y
PT025/6/7/8 ST-90-93 SAMPLES Studio quality+ Y
PT029 YAMAHA DX7 VOICE FILER for DX7 synths!
PT030 YAMAHA DX7 VOICE SORTER for the above
PT031/2/3 ST-87 - 89 3 disks full !+Y
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PT041 NOISEPLAYER 4.0 Multitasking module play
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APD373 COMPILER 1.36 UPDATE, LATEST compi
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PU289 AUDIO ANIMATION STUDIO Create your ow
PU290 TACK ANIMATION CONSTRUCTION KIT G
PU291 1200 WORKBENCH HACKS Useful utils! Y
PU292 1200 UTILS1 Gif & PCX datatypes etc!A mu
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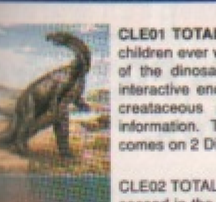


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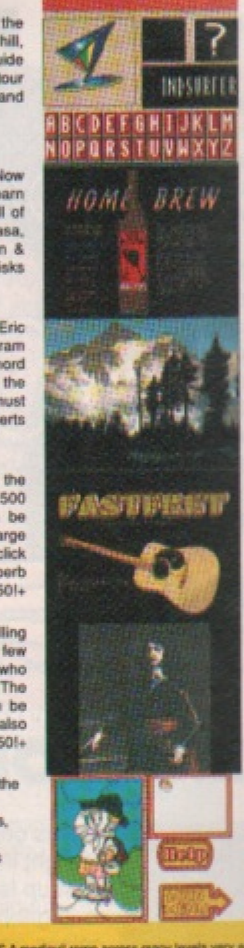
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CLE12 ALPHABET TEACH A nice educational program for the young., a very simple to understand spelling program which shows the child a picture & asks for the completion of the appropriate word. The program also has built in speech and will run a series of pictures at the same time speaking the name of the object displayed. Comes on1 disk and is priced 3.50+

CLE13 HOME BREW This is a superb program for the creation of home made wines. If covers all the details of fermentation, bottling & storing of the wine. A selection of recipes for many different wines can be found on the disk & there is an option for printing the recipies out to a connected printer! This program comes on 1 disk and is priced at 3.50. +

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CLE15 FAST FRET By Keith Klatworthy, this program is a guitar scales tutor, the very thing for the budding lead guitarist! Will play the scales through the Amigas sound chip with ajustment of speed for every level of skill required! There are many exercises in many scales so you too can become the next rock legend! Supplied on one disk priced 3.50. +

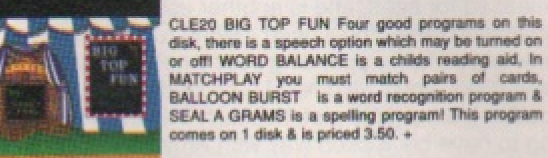
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CLE21 JIGMANIA by Len Tucker. There are two programs on this disk, Jigmania is a jigsaw solving program and will keep you & the kids amused for ages! There is also a jigsaw construction set to allow you to create your own too! There are several jigsaws provided on the disk and there are childrens and adult options! Comes on 1 disk priced 3.50. +

CLG18 SKAN 29 This is a fun platform game in which you must guide Sid through 220 screens and defeat the big droids at the end of each level, the game will run faster if you are lucky enough to have an Amiga 1200! This game should keep you occupied for a long time! Comes on 1 disk priced 3.50. +

CLG 20 JUNGLE BUNGLE by Len Tucker. This game is essentiallyt an icon driven adventure written mainly for the younger person in mind but anyone can play! You must catch the raindrops but beware of the banana stealing monkeys! Very addictive with colourful graphics. Comes on 1 disk 3.50. +

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...superb collection of coloured clipart. ...Ham mode (4096 colours), though some is ...ours. Can be loaded into Deluxe Paint 4 ...ther package accepting Ham pictures! ... 500, 500+, 600, 1200 & 4000!)

- ...MAPS, Alganistan - Botswana, autoboots! + Y
- ...MAPS, Brazil - Checkoslovakia, autoboots! +Y
- ...MAPS, Denmark - Grenada , hires maps! +Y
- ...MAPS, Guadel - Illinois, hires maps! +Y
- ...MAPS, India - Luxembourg, hire maps! +Y
- ...MAPS, Macau - Missisipi, autoboots! +Y
- ...MAPS, Montana - New York, hires maps! +Y
- ...MAPS, Neutral Zone - Iraq - S Dakota! +Y
- ...MAPS, Senegal - Tuuse, autoboots! +Y
- ...MAPS, Texas - Zimbabwe, autoboots! +Y
- ...PTILES, good pictures, autoboots! +Y
- ...ACTORS, famous faces, autoboots! +Y(2)
- ...CRAFT, 1-26, assorted, autoboots! +Y
- ...CRAFT, 27-32 & Cars! autoboots! +Y
- ...IRDS, 1-12 Super pictures, autoboots! +Y
- ...IRDS, 13-29 More avian pictures! +Y
- ...IRDS, 30-41 Lots more birds,autoboots! +Y
- ...IRDS, Many more bird pics, autoboots! +Y
- ...IRDS, And some more fab pictures! +Y
- ...IRDS, 116-130 Some good pictures! +Y
- ...IRDS, 131-138 More bird pictures! +Y
- ...IRDS, More superb pictures here! +Y
- ...ATS, 1-16 Super cat pics,autoboots! +Y
- ... DOGS, 1-126 Super dog pics,8 disks! +Y
- ...PLORERS 1-13 famous explorers,autoboots+y
- ... FISH 1-92 Super pics pictures,(4 disks)+y
- ...OWERS 1-13 Flower pictures,autoboots!+y
- ...OWERS 14-25 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
- ...OWERS 26-37 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
- ...OWERS 38-50 More flower pics,workbench+y
- ...OWERS 51-62 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
- ...OWERS 63-74 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
- ...OWERS 75-87 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
- ...OWERS 88-100 More flower pics,autoboots+y
- ...OWERS 101-113 More flower pics,autoboots+y

- CCL050 FLOWERS 114-127 More flower pics,autoboots+y
- CCL051 FLOWERS 128-138, FRUIT 1-4 pics autoboots+y
- CCL052 FRUIT 5-18, Good pictures! autoboots! +Y
- CCL054 FRUIT, More fruit & leaves etc!,autoboots+Y
- CCL055 FRONTIER 1-13 Pioneer pictures,autoboots
- CCL056 HORSES 1-16 Great horse pics,autoboots! +Y
- CCL057 HORSES 17-22, insects 1-8, autoboots! +Y
- CCL058 INSECTS 11-23 Small creatures! +Y
- CCL059 INSECTS 24-41 More pics! autoboots! +Y
- CCL060 INSECTS 42-59 More insects! autoboots! +Y
- CCL061 INSECTS 60-63, Inventors 1-11 autoboots! +Y
- CCL062 INVENTORS 12-24 More inventors autoboots! +Y
- CCL063 INVENTORS 25-35, MAMMALS 1-10! autoboots! +Y
- CCL064 MAMMALS 11-26 More animals pictures! +Y
- CCL065 MAMMALS 27-46 and more animals! +Y
- CCL066 MAMMALS 45-65 more mammals,autoboots! +Y
- CCL067 MAMMALS 66-82 and some more! autoboots! +Y
- CCL068 MAMMALS 83-102 and many more autoboots+Y
- CCL069 MAMMALS 103-119 many more! autoboots! +Y
- CCL070 MAMMALS 121-141 superb pictures! autoboots +Y
- CCL071 MAMMALS 142-158, & INSTRUMENTS 1-4! +Y
- CCL072 INSTRUMENTS 4-25 Musical! autoboots +Y
- CCL073 INSTRUMENTS 26-36, MILITARY 1-6 autoboots +Y
- CCL074 MILITARY 7-17,& MUSICIANS 1-4! +Y
- CCL075 MUSICIANS 9-21 Classical! autoboots! +Y
- CCL076 PREHISTORIC 2-19 Dinosaurs! autoboots! +Y
- CCL077 PREHISTORIC 20-25, PEOPLE 1-8 autoboots! +Y
- CCL078/80 PEOPLE 9-50 Lots of people! (3 disks)+Y
- CCL081 PEOPLE & Presidents, good pictures! +Y
- CCL082/4 PRESIDENTS 1-40 USA presidents,3 disks +Y
- CCL085 REPTILES 1-19 Good pictures autoboots! +Y
- CCL086 REPTILES 19-38 More reptiles! autoboots! +Y
- CCL087 REPTILES 39-50, Ships 1-9,autoboots! +Y
- CCL088 SHIPS 10-33 Marine vessels! +Y
- CCL089 SPORTSMEN, Various sportsmen,autoboots! +Y
- CCL091 TREES, Lots of tree pictures! autoboots! +Y
- CCL092 TREES, Lots more tree pics! autoboots! +Y
- CCL093 TREES, And some more trees! +Y
- CCL094 TREES 57-70 trees lots of trees,autoboots!+y
- CCL095 TREES 71-84 more tree pictures, autoboots!+y
- CCL096 TREES 85-100 even more trees,workbench!+y
- CCL097/100 VEGETABLES 1-48 good pics 4 disks,workbench+y

CLASSIC CLIPART (Black & White)

(Okay on A1200 / A4000.)

The clipart in this collection is very high quality, huge bitmaps, many greater than an Amiga hires screen, for use in Dpaint or DTP packages, each disk autoboots as a slideshow allowing you to view the entire bitmap by moving the mouse! (Prices per disk!)

- ART01 WEDDINGS Super wedding clipart, 2 disks!+
- ART02 HOUSES 2 disks, pictures of mansions etc!+
- ART03 RELIGIOUS 3 disks full of holy clipart!+
- ART04 WWII AIRCRAFT World war II planes!+
- ART05 MEN 2 disks full of men at work!+
- ART06 WOMEN 2 disks full of women clips!+
- ART07 KIDS 2 disks containing kids clipart!+
- ART08 BUSINESS Disk full of office clipart!+
- ART09 OFFICE Another office type disk!+
- ART10 STUDENTS Lots of student type pics!+
- ART11 SALETIME Many useful logos etc!+
- ART12 XMAS 3 disks of Xmas related pics!+
- ART13 PUNCH 3 disks of cartoon pics! +
- ART14 ANIMALS Fantastic quality pictures!+
- ART15 CATS Only 12 pics but super quality!+
- ART16 SILHOUETTES 18 super silhouettes!+
- ART17 SCHOOLS 2 disks of school pictures!+
- ART18 BABIES Clipart on a baby theme!+
- ART19 SPORT 2 disks full of sport pictures!+
- ART20 OLYMPIC Another sport type disk!+
- ART21 MEDICAL 2 disks full of medical clipart!+
- ART22 SEALIFE Pictures from the Ocean!+
- ART23 DECORATIVE MONTHS 1 for every month+
- ART24 WACKY Funny comic type clipart!+
- ART25 HOLIDAYS Holiday type pictures!+
- ART26 BANNERS 2 disks full of banners!+







- ART27 ART NOUVEAU FLOWERS Floral art!+
- ART28 BUTTERFLIES Nice pictures!+
- ART29 FOOD 2 disks on a food/kitchen theme!+
- ART30 COLOURING BOOK Colour in Dpaint!+
- ART31 BORDERS 2 disks, must load into DTP!+
- ART32 MAC CLIP 2 disks high quality macart!+
- ART33 HORNBACK Nice scenic clipart!+
- ART34 TEDDY BEARS 2 disks of Teddy bears!+
- ART35 VANITY FARE 2 disks fashion clipart!+
- ART36 HALLOWEEN CLIPART Wierd clipart!+
- ART37 SHOWTIME Dancing, singing etc!+
- ART38 VEGGIES Vegetarian clipart!+
- ART39 FLORAL 14 very detailed pictures!+
- ART40 MYTHS Mythical images + zodiac!+
- ART41 DOG WOODCUTS Super 300dpi pics!+
- ART42 CAT WOODCUTS Great wildcat pics!+
- ART43 AFRICAN WOODCUTS African animals!+
- ART44 AMERICAN WOODCUTS More animals!+
- ART45 ARTIC WOODCUTS Northern animals!+
- ART46 FARM WOODCUTS Farm animals!+
- ART47 MIXED ANIMAL WOODCUTS Nice pics!+
- ART48 BIRDS WOODCUTS 18th century bird pics+
- ART49 MORE ANIMALS More superb pictures!+
- ART50 ANIMAL LINEART Varied selection of pics
- ART51 BOTANICAL ART detailed plant pics!+
- ART52 FAMILY SCENES 2 disks of domestic life!+
- ART53 GOLF HUMOUR 2 amusing cartoon disks!+
- ART54 SPACE & TRANSPORT On a space theme!+
- ART55 SOFTSCENE2 29 rural scenery pictures!+
- ART56 SPORTS3 More pics on a sports theme!+
- ART57 NAVY Lots of naval type pictures!+
- ART58 TRAVEL 2 disks on a travel theme!+
- ART59 ALPHABET Borders & alphabet clips!+(2)
- ART60 ACCENTS & FLASHES Burst stars+ more+

PROGRAMMERS : Have you written a good program, ie a utility, educational program or a game? Why not send it in for evaluation? If its really good, then you too could be earning money!!!

VALLY PD
CU05, PO BOX 15, PETERLEE
CO. DURHAM SR8 1NZ
TEL:091 587 1195
FAX:091 587 1195

BLITTERCHIPS
CU05, CLIFFE HOUSE, PRIMROSE STREET, KEIGHLEY. BD21 4NB.
TEL: 0535 667 469
FAX: 0535 667 469

NBS
CU05, 1CHAIN LANE NEWPORT
I.W. PO30 5QA
TEL: 0983 529 594
FAX:0983 821 599

PD SCENE

Skint? Bored? Need some stimulation? Then get a load of this month's PD offerings, as perused by Tony Horgan and enlightenment will be yours.

QUALITY TIME

animation

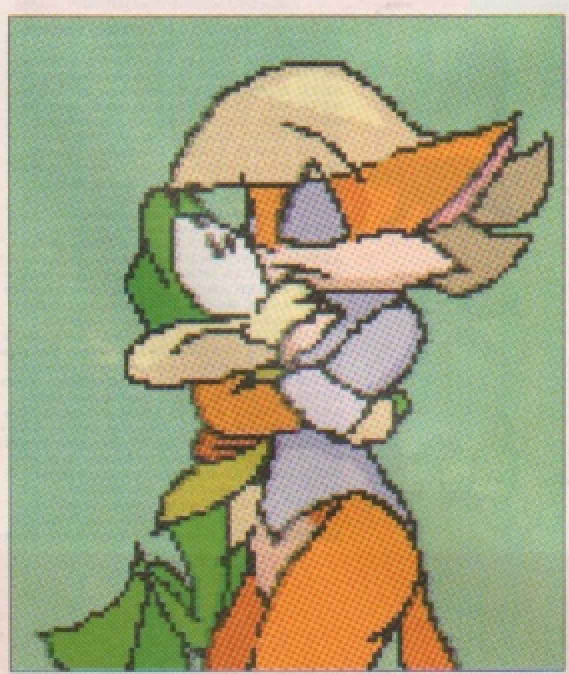
I was beginning to think Eric Schwartz had given up on his PD cartoons. This is the first he's released for ages, and is another essential for all animation fans. You'll need 4Mb to run it, and unless you fancy spending your whole day swapping disks, you'll also need a second disk drive to load it. It's a simple plot, basically Flip the Frog trying to have his wicked way with Amy the Squirrel, hampered by constant interruptions from the doorbell. How Eric manages to make a squirrel look sexy, I don't know. The animation is brilliant as always, and there's plenty of speech and sound effects. If you've got the necessary hardware, get a copy without delay.

Available from: 17 Bit, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, WF1 1DH. Tel: 0924 366982. 4 disks. Price: £5.50 (including P&P)

92%







JAPANIME MOTION PICTURE

slideshow

Japanime goes for one of those intros that turns your Amiga into another computer. This time it's an Amstrad 128. However, this fortunately doesn't last for too long and it soon gets back into Amiga mode and brings on the first picture of the slideshow.

Unlike your standard CLI-based slideshow, this one has a few animated pictures, plus some double-size pics that automatically scroll around the screen to give you a view of the whole thing. It's Japanese cartoon graphics all the way. Admittedly, some of the pictures on offer do look a bit amateur, but luckily they are the exception rather than the rule. There are two disks of them, so there's plenty to work your way through. This is definitely one of the better slideshows around at the moment – welll worth investing in if this is your sort of thing.

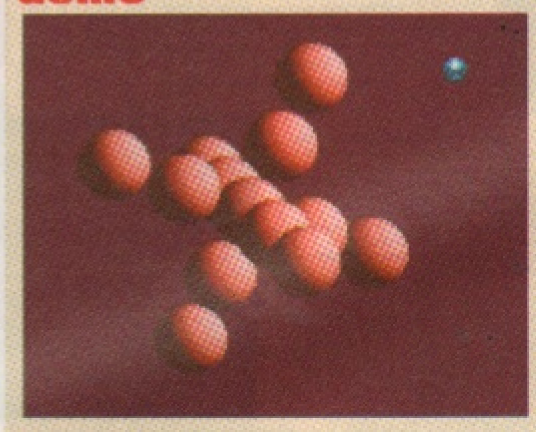
Available from: Pathfinder PD, 41 Marion Street, Bingley, West Yorks, BD16 4NQ. Tel: 0274 565205. Disk no. PD114 a+b. Price: £3.00 (including P&P).

84%



CYNOSTIC DEMO COLLECTION 2

demo



This is one of Cynostic's own compilations, made up of eight intros and mini demos from various sources. First up is a music demo, Rotterdam Megamix 7. It's a mad gabber-techno-hardcore track, with strange noises and mega-fast bass drum/hi hat loops, plus a few breakbeats here and there – most will hate it, some will love it! Apart from this, the rest of the intros are plain old combinations of scrolltexts, vectors, copper bars and logos, with some run-of-the-mill backing tunes. Well worth it if you like the sound of the Rotterdam Megamix though.

Available from: Cynostic PD, 85 Wyken Croft Road, Coventry, CV2 3AD. Tel: 0203 682084. Disk no. D0084. Price: £2.00 (including P&P).

70%

PLANET GROOVE

demo

Attention all 1200 owners! This is the first demo on the scene to make use of the new AGA 256-colour mode, although unfortunately it doesn't manage to do anything particularly stunning with it.

What you get on this disk are some nice exploding firework and dot sine-scroll effects on a 256-colour graduated backdrop. To be honest, none of the effects would look out of place on a standard A500 demo. The graduated backdrops are probably bitmaps, but they may as well be copper lists. Still, the swirly colours are nice, and it's good to see someone making an effort. There must be potential for some mind-warping demos with the AGA chips, but this one certainly isn't going to cause a commotion.

Available from: Cynostic PD, 85 Wyken Croft Road, Coventry, CV2 3AD. Tel: 0203 682084. Disk no. D0106. Price: £2.00 (including P&P).

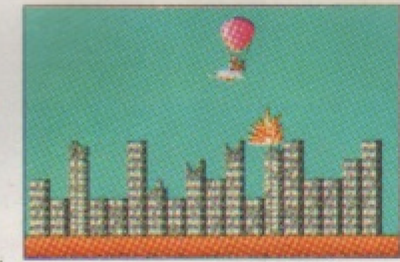
51%



BALLOONACY

game

Do you remember that game where you fly across a skyline of office blocks, trying to bomb them all before your plane loses altitude and crashes? Well this is the same game, only this time you're in a balloon. The trouble is that it's far too easy. As if it weren't simple enough, you're given sandbags, which can be jettisoned to give you more time. It's a pleasant enough diversion, but a retarded chimp wearing a blindfold wouldn't have any difficulty pressing the button at the right time. Suitable for three year-olds who can't fathom out *PacMan*.



Available from: Cynostic PD, 85 Wyken Croft Road, Coventry, CV2 3AD. Tel: 0203 682084. Disk no. G0082. Price: £2.00 (including P&P).



MIRROR

music demo

At first this looks like it's going to be a full-blown demo. The intro effect is clever, but it can hardly be described as exciting. From then on, it's a fairly simple two-disk music demo with a selection of nine tunes. All of them are very neatly sampled and produced, but they tend to be uneventful in places. Rather than tunes that you'd sit down and listen to, they're more appropriate as background music, while you're doing the ironing or something else that's rather tedious. If electric pianos, organs and slapped basses sound like your cup of tea, you'll appreciate this lot. The front end is nicely done, but could do with some jiggling VU meters, wibbly graphic effects, or at least something other than the scrolltext. Another one for the demo tune collectors.

Available from: Cynostic PD, 85 Wyken Croft Road, Coventry, CV2 3AD. Tel: 0203 682084. Disk no. S0056 a+b. Price: £2.00 (including P&P).

68%



LIBERATOR

game

It's true, you can write a hopeless shoot 'em up without the aid of *Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit*! Just to prove it, here's *Liberator*. Featuring some of the most uninspired aliens ever, this game puts you in control of a ship flying up a vertically scrolling background. Your pea-shooter cannon is barely enough to destroy the aliens, and even when you do kill them, they absolutely refuse to explode! As if this wasn't bad enough, you only get one life. Take a look if you want to know how not to write a shoot 'em up.

Available from: Virus Free PD, 31 Farringdon Road, Swindon, Wiltshire. Tel: 0793 512321. Disk no. 3138. Price: £1.75 (including P&P).

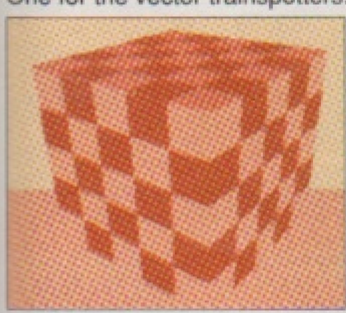
33%



OH NO! MORE VECTORS!

demo

My thoughts exactly! Vectors rate pretty low on the gosh-o-meter, but I can stomach a few if they are sandwiched between some decent effects. A whole demo of them is another matter. Considering it's all vector-orientated, there's more variety than you might expect, but it's a bit on the predictable side. It's all nice and smooth, but there's nothing to make you sit up and say 'Wow!'. One for the vector trainspotters.



Available from: Cynostic PD, 85 Wyken Croft Road, Coventry, CV2 3AD. Tel: 0203 682084. Disk no. D0089. Price: £2.00 (including P&P).

58%

SIMPLY THE BEST 26

demo

If you like a bit of variety in your demos, compilations like this one from LSD are usually a good bet. *Simply the Best No. 26* is a collection of three mini-demos. First up is *Free Your Mind* from Nuance. After an extremely tedious start, it gets going with a 3D vector face, followed by some simple but effective colour effects and a smooth 3D zoom. The soundtrack's not too bad either.

Next on the list is the debut release from a new crew called Lemon. Some nice vector-bob bubble patterns get things going, along with a pounding techno soundtrack, which moves more into the realms of traditional demo music towards the end, while the visuals switch to some kaleidoscopic dot patterns, followed by a strange kind of plasma zoom thing. The third intro is just a rotating 3D vector star and a standard soundtrack.

Available from: Cynostic PD, 85 Wyken Croft Road, Coventry, CV2 3AD. Tel: 0203 682084. Disk no. D0105. Price: £2.00 (including P&P)

78%

OVERLOAD 2

music demo

New York-style graffiti adorns the opening stages of *Overload*, and it's only after a few screens of colourful but illegible logos, that you realise that this is primarily a music disk. After the drawn-out intro, you eventually get to the main tune selector. From this rather snazzy animated screen, you can take your pick from five tracks. Best of the bunch is *The Marathon*, which sounds like Jarre's *Laser Harp*. The others are a cut above the average demo tune, although still very much in the demo style.

Available from: Cynostic PD, 85 Wyken Croft Road, Coventry, CV2 3AD. Tel: 0203 682084. Disk no. S0080. Price: £2.00 (including P&P).



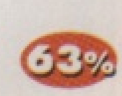
ACOUSTIC SILENCE

music demo

Here's another for all you lovers of classic demo tunes. Quadriga's *Acoustic Silence* is a collection of eight varied tracks, wrapped up in a simple little front end. You get info on each tune as it's played, including a countdown telling you how much of the track you've got left to endure, sorry, enjoy.

Available from: Pathfinder PD, 41 Marion Street, Bingley, West Yorks, BD16 4NQ. Disk no. PM54. Price: £2.00 (including P&P).





PD UTILITIES

Tony Horgan continues his look at all things PD with a comprehensive round-up of all the latest utilities.

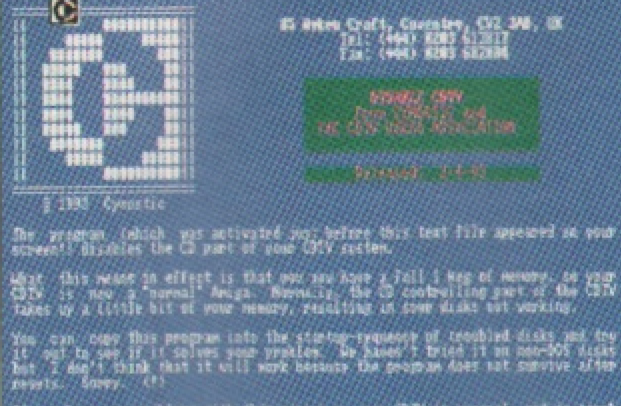
DISABLE CDTV

memory utility

If you've got a CDTV, you may be well feeling rather cheated. Although it's quoted as having 1Mb of RAM, the system takes about 50K of that to help it operate the CD drive efficiently. You might think that 50K from 1000K isn't going to make much difference, but if you're running a program that uses every last byte of a 1Mb machine, it can make all the difference.

Applications software is usually configurable in a number of forms, which can often avoid incompatibility problems, but quite a few games have fallen foul of the memory loss. In this very issue, we test a hardware solution to the problem (page 88), but at £2.00, the software alternative does sound tempting.

The utility itself comes on an autobooting disk, but the idea is that you add it to your startup sequence. It cures the memory shortage problem if you're using AmigaDOS disks, but doesn't survive a reset, so it's no use with most games. This is a bit of a shame, as it's games that are worst hit. Even so, if you've got a Workbench compatible program that needs that little bit extra RAM, *Disable CDTV* will do the job.

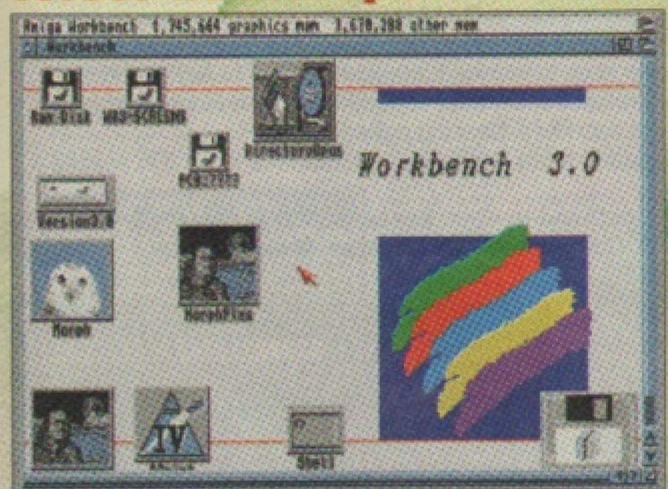


Available from: Cynostic PD, 85 Wyken Croft Road, Coventry, CV2 3AD. Tel: 0203 613817. Disk no. U0104. Price: £2.00 (including P&P). Compatibility: CDTV, A500, A500+. Memory: 1Mb.

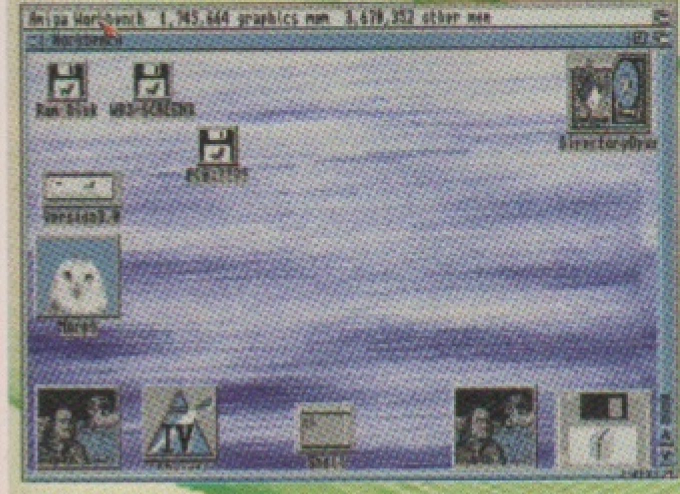
75%

WORKBENCH 3.0 SCREENS

colour backdrops



Spruce up that drab old Workbench with one of 13 professionally drawn backdrops.



One of the most striking new features on Workbench 3.0 is the one that lets you put a multi-colour backdrop on your Workbench window. The trouble is, if your best attempts with *DPaint* resemble the scribblings of a three year old, it's still not going to be enough to impress your mates. What you need to make a real impression is a collection of stylishly drawn oven-ready backdrops, which could be slipped in behind your icons whenever you wanted.

Well that's handy, because that's exactly what we've got here. Workbench 3.0 Screens is a disk of 13 IFF images designed just for that purpose. Most are shaded textures, the kind of thing you'd see behind the football results on the news. A few others are more like letter-heads. Most of them work well on an uncluttered Workbench, although some can make things look rather too busy, if you've got a lot of icons and windows on the go.

Some of the more subtle examples could double as effective sources for art packages and 3D texture-mapping. Get a copy and kiss goodbye to that tedious grey Workbench.

Available from: PD Soft, 1 Bryant Avenue, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2YD. Tel: 0702 466933. £2.00 (including P&P). Disk no. V3021. Memory: 2Mb. Compatibility: A4000 and A1200 only.

78%

SUPER SOUND 3.2

sound utilities

I don't know about you, but I can never have too many sample editors. OctaMED handles 95 per cent of my sampling workload, but there's no beating *AMAS II*'s brilliant reverb, or *AudioMaster IV*'s time stretching. The trouble is, just that trio of programs could set you back a fair few quid, and if you're only going to use one or two features from each, it can seem even more expensive. The solution? *Super Sound* of course.

Lesser versions of *Super Sound* have been around for a while, but with the new 3.2 release, it's ready to take on anything the commercial sector can offer. The sample quality is on a par with the competition, at rates of up to 24kHz in either mono or stereo, but where it really excels is in the editing.

Apart from all the usual cutting and pasting options, there are two menus packed with special effects. Almost all of them are variable, so you can tailor them to suit your sounds.

The sound-warping options include bass boost, treble boost, unfilter, smooth wave, tremolo, echo, reverse echo, reverb, reverse reverb, lowpass filter, highpass filter, volume, metallic, treble waah, fade in and out, filter waah, unfilter waah, mix, reverse, octave up and down, phaser, distort and flange. The waah effects are a first, as are the reverse reverbs and echoes.

There's still some work to be done on the reverb routine, but the flanger and phaser are both excellent. The only problem I could find, is that when playing samples with a loop, the loop jumps back slightly early.

The fun doesn't stop there either. The Realtime Effects Generator included on the disk is just as impressive, giving you the ability to add delays, echoes, phases and various types of distortion to any incoming sound, with surprisingly clean results. A very basic sequencer is on the disk too.

KBE Software publish a professional looking manual, with annotated screenshots, hotkey lists and tutorials, which is available for £7. Anyone who's seriously into sampling would be a complete and utter fool to pass up the superb quality offered by *Super Sound 3.2*. This could be your last chance to get it on the cheap – it's bound to cross over to the commercial market within an upgrade or two, so get your copy now!

Available from: Systec PD, 2 Ridge Road, Letchworth, Herts, SG6 1PN. Tel: 0462 483604. Disk no. CLU06. Price: £5.25 (including P&P). Compatibility: All Amigas. Memory: 1 Mb.

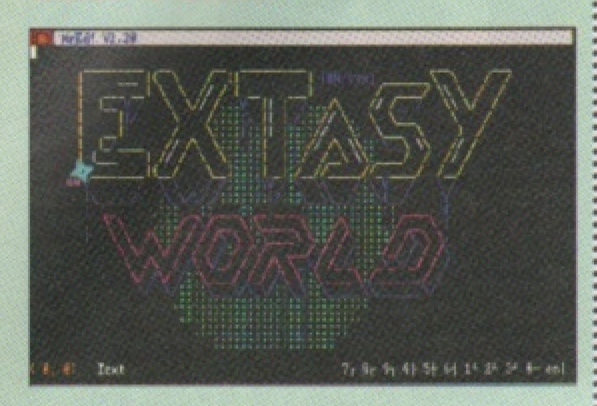
93%



»

» ANSI GALLERY

ansi editor







If you're a regular user of bulletin boards or PD software, you'll be familiar with ANSI graphics, even if you didn't realise it. You know those funny intro screens you get when you log on, or boot up a PD disk (the ones that look like they've been designed on a Spectrum)? Well they're made up of ANSI graphics. Instead of being stored as memory-hungry IFF bitmaps, they're made from far more efficient keyboard characters.

The rise in popularity of ANSI graphics is curious. While most are raving over 24-bit ray-tracings others are getting excited over backslashes and asterisks.

ANSI Gallery is primarily a showcase of various ANSI titles and animations, but it also allows you to create your own, thanks to the editor that's included on the disk (Prism 1.5). If you've been using a text editor until now, this will seem too good to be true! It's a very simple design, but works extremely well. You position the cursor on the screen with the mouse, and then enter the character from the keyboard. New colours can be selected from the palette at the bottom of the screen. Within a few minutes you can knock up an intro for your next demo or bulletin board, and all it costs in memory is a few kilobytes.

Whether you've got the editor or not, give it a go if you're into ANSI graphics, as there are plenty of examples of still and animated screens on the disk that should inspire your own creations.

Available from: PD Soft, 1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 2YD. Tel: 0702 612259/466933. Disk no. V1007. Price: £2.00. Compatibility: All Amigas. Memory: 512K. 81%

CHORD TUTOR

music theory

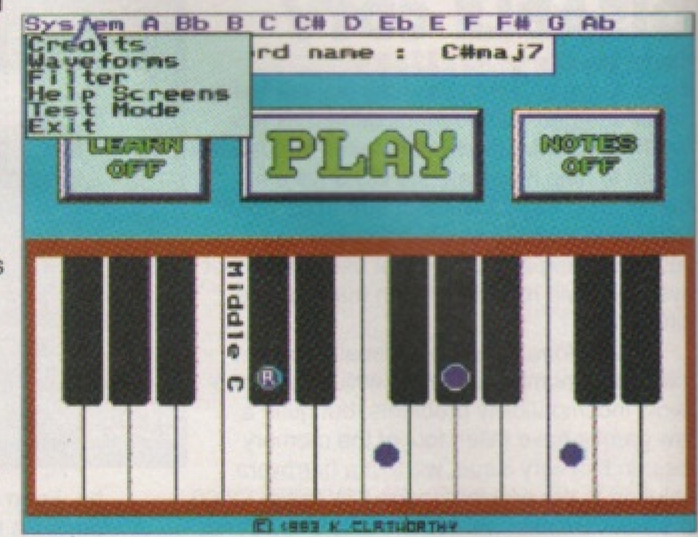
I don't know about you, but I never fancied piano lessons (and if you ever met my old music teacher, you'd see why). Instead, I've got by with a self-taught repertoire consisting of the bassline from *Killer*, the opening bars of *Steptoe and Son*, and three chords from the *Twin Peaks* theme – it's amazing how far you can bluff your way with such a pathetic arsenal of musical prowess.

On the other hand, there are times when you might want to really push the boat out and learn a whole new set of chords, in which case Chord Tutor could be just the thing you're after.

There's plenty of scope for a chord tutor program, and at first this looks like it could be quite helpful. Most of the screen is taken up by a large two-octave keyboard. By clicking on the keys with the pointer, you can play single notes. Chords can be selected from the menus, and as they're played, the notes are highlighted with dots. Once you think you've learnt most of the chords, you can put the program into test mode. This asks you to input a chord, and you then have to click the pointer on the right notes. The trouble is, you can only click on one note at a time, so you can't actually play the chord!

Soundtracker-style keyboard input would have helped, and MIDI support would have been a very simple but extremely effective addition. The chords and notes are played on one of three grating synth sounds, not piano samples as you might have expected. There's plenty of potential in *Chord Tutor*, but for the time being I think I'll stick to *Steptoe and Son*.

Available from: Systec PD, 2 Ridge Road, Letchworth, Herts, SG6 1PN. Tel: 0462 483604. Disk no. CLE 25. Price: £3.50. Memory: 512K. Compatibility: All Amigas 52%



SPEED UTILITIES V1.0

utility compilation

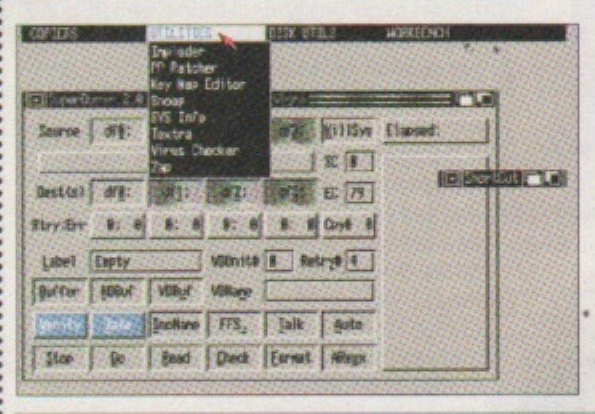
One of the more user-friendly utility compilations, *Speed Utilities* has a generous offering of handy programs, all accessed from a neat pull-down menu system. The featured utilities are *D-Copy, Super Duper, Imploder V4.0, PP Patcher, Key Map Editor, Snoop, Sysinfo, Textra, Virus Checker, Zap, Bootcopy, Fixdisk, Headclean* and *Last Hope*, along with Workbench, Clock, Shell and 1.3 Preferences.

There's not enough room here for a complete description of each, but here's a quick rundown. *D-Copy* is probably the best PD copier available, with a good nibble mode. *Super Duper* is a simple WB 2+ AmigaDOS copier and disk formatter. *Imploder* compresses executable files, *Keymap Editor* lets you alter your keymap via a friendly interface, *Snoopdos* keeps you updated on the comings and goings of files under Workbench, and *Sysinfo 3.01* will tell you everything you want to know about your Amiga (and more!). *Textra 2.0* is a text editor, *Virus Checker* is up to version 6.20, and *Zap* is a binary file editor. *Bootcopy* copies bootblocks, *Fixdisk* is a more reliable *Diskdoctor* replacement, *Last Hope* attempts to recover deleted files, and *Head Clean* is for use with head-cleaning disks.

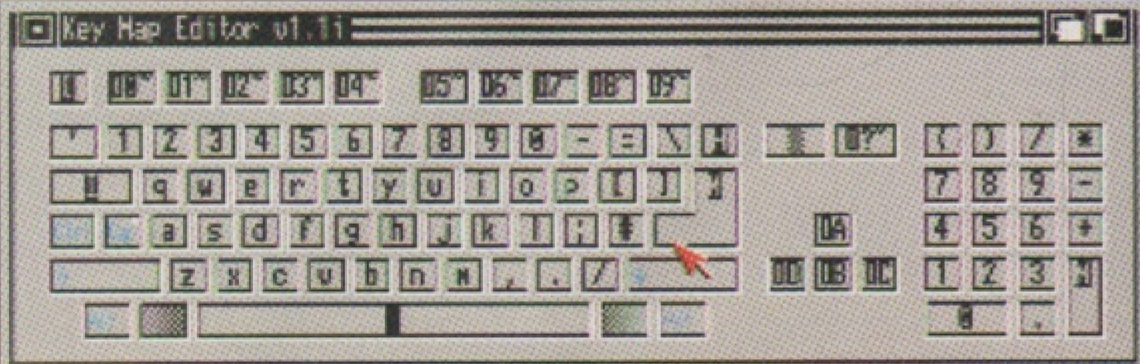
Speed Utilities is definitely one of the best compilations available, and deserves a place in anyone's disk collection.

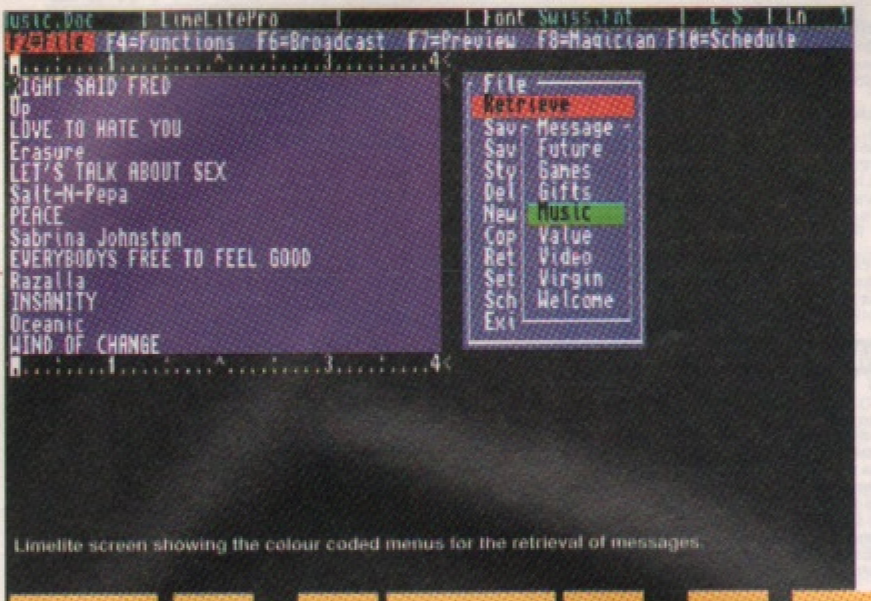
Available from: PD Soft, 1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 2YD. Tel: 0702 612259/466933. Disk no. V1006. Price: £2.00. Compatibility: All Amigas. Memory: 512K.



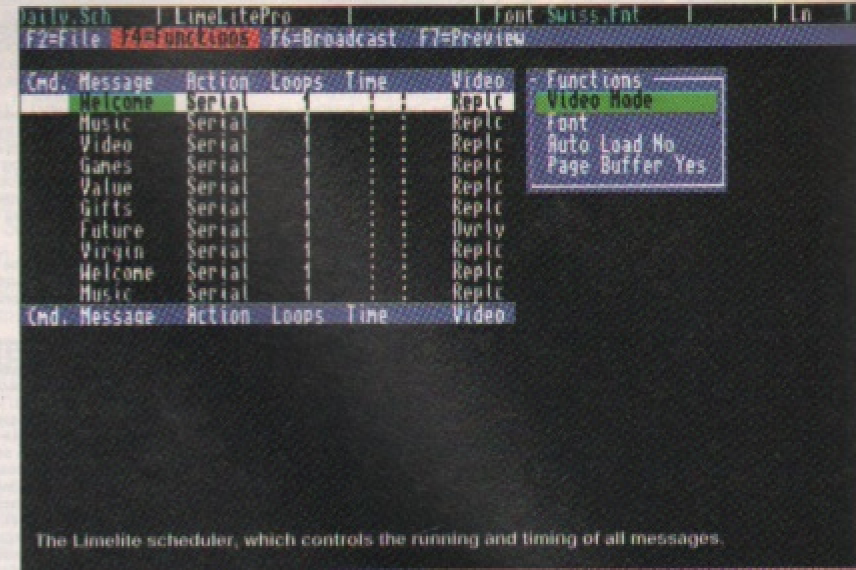








Limelite screen showing the colour coded menus for the retrieval of messages.



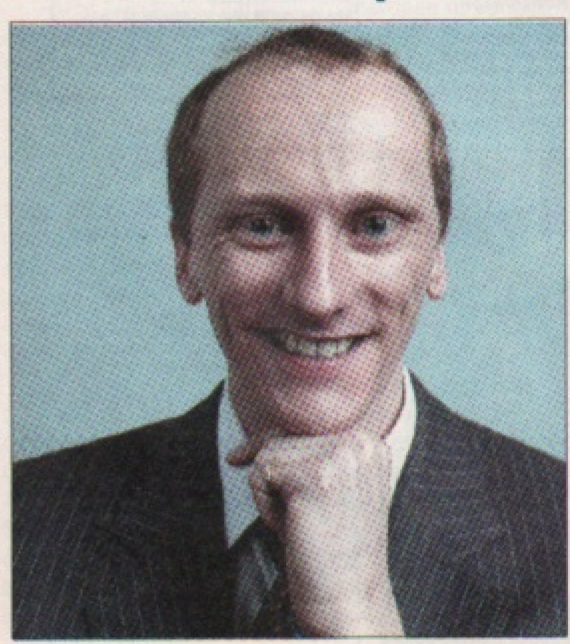
The Limelite scheduler, which controls the running and timing of all messages.

FUTURE SOFTWARE SYSTEMS

If you've ever bought a record, chances are the shop had a TV or video displaying the latest hits. Would you be shocked to learn that it's probably controlled by an Amiga? Jon Sloan goes behind the scenes to speak to the man responsible.



PROFILES



Many of us have heard the term 'multimedia' bandied around. But how many can claim to truly know what it means and how to use it to its best effect? One man can. Chris Fulton is the brains behind a simple mutlimedia player that has netted him and his company, Future Software Systems, a healthy client list of corporate names that include Virgin, Our Price, and Granada Plc.

Future was formed in 1985 to provide consulting and bespoke systems development to new computer graphic and video users. The Managing Director and only full-time staff member, Chris Fulton, first got involved in computers way back in 1977 when he attended a computer course. After successfully completing that he embarked on a freelance career as a software engineer/systems analyst working on a vast range of platforms, from super computers, such as the CDC 6000/600, to standard desktop machines, like the PC.

EARLY DAYS

'I set up Future mainly as a consultancy for high-end systems users, a bit like Rent A Scientist – if you've got a problem we'll find a solution.' Almost immediately Chris recognised the potential of computer graphics and how important they were becoming to his clients. 'At the same time a friend called Tony Prince, who was a DJ for Radio Caroline, was putting on various shows at the Hippodrome and wanted some graphics for them. I helped him out and it went down a treat. From there I started to do more and more work for the entertainment industry and, when I saw what was happening in the professional retail market, I decided to write a multimedia player aimed at that.' This program, later called *Limelite Junior*, is a video typewriter and special effects generator for use in pubs, cafes and small nightclubs. With experience at IBM behind him Chris wrote it on a PC and it was first used in a project at the Albert Hall. However, he was less than happy about the results: 'It cost us an arm and a leg to get the IBM graphics into a suitable video signal to project onto a video wall. I wasn't that impressed by the quality of graphics available and couldn't see anyone producing the hardware to handle them.' Fortunately, the A500 appeared on the market soon after and when Chris looked at its specs he decided that it was ideal for his purposes. He decided to port his program across onto it and the first systems were supplied to clients in November 1987.

out now singles

1. I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
Whitney Houston
2. EXTERMINATE!
Snap featuring Niki Harris
3. THE LOVE I LOST
West End featuring Sybil
4. I'M EASY/BE AGGRESSIVE
Faith No More
5. WE ARE FAMILY'93 MIXES
Sister Sledge
6. ORDINARY WORLD
Duran Duran

mega means more music + video + g

An example information screen showing the top singles. This is updated each week by the staff in the shop.

MOVING ON

It was updated a year later to include a control for genlocks, remote update and triggering capabilities and, more importantly, external device support via the serial port. This meant that *Limelite Professional*, as it became, could control VCRs, Lighting Controllers, Video Wall electronics and other vital multimedia machines. Chris could sell this solution not only to small pubs and the like but to large concert venues and chain store retailers.

Future's latest project is a software solution for multimedia applications, called *Limelite Montage*. It's a 'hands off' multimedia player. Its main use is for retailers and other users who need bright, witty ways of getting across key info without the hassle of inputting text. Basically the screen images can be made up of pictures, text, pictograms, and audio all mixed together using Montage's built in real time timers and genlock control facilities. However, as a 'hands off' device it hasn't got a true customer front end at the moment. So Chris plans to look at developing one so that it can be placed in hotels and the like where there's a need for fairly frequent text editing by the user.

He's not modest about his success, and rightly so considering the quality of clients that he's served. Well, let's hope that he can persuade more large corporations that the Amiga truly is an exceptional business machine. Chris can be contacted on 0628 24318.

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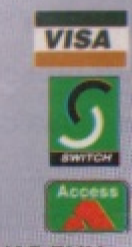
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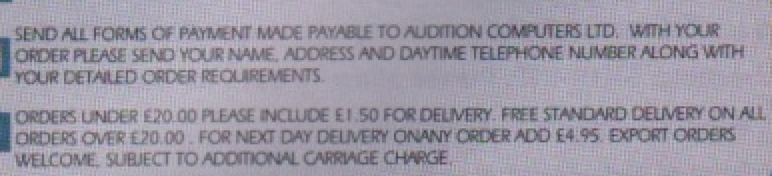
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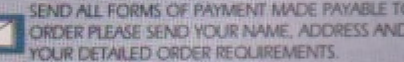




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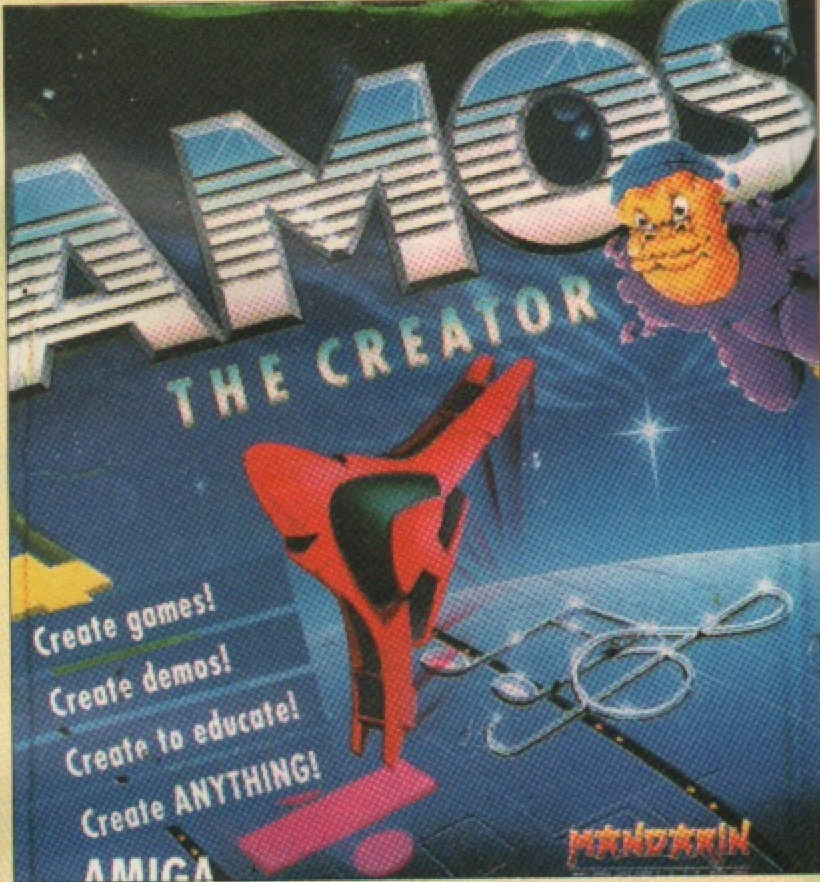
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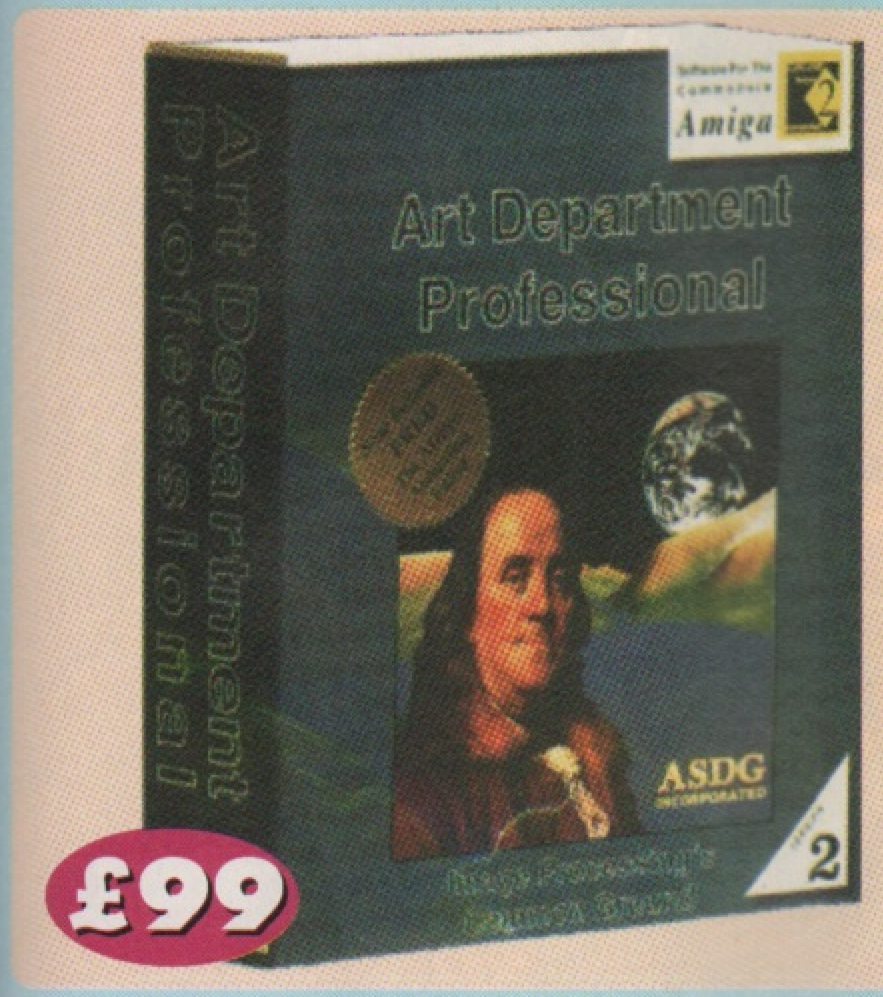
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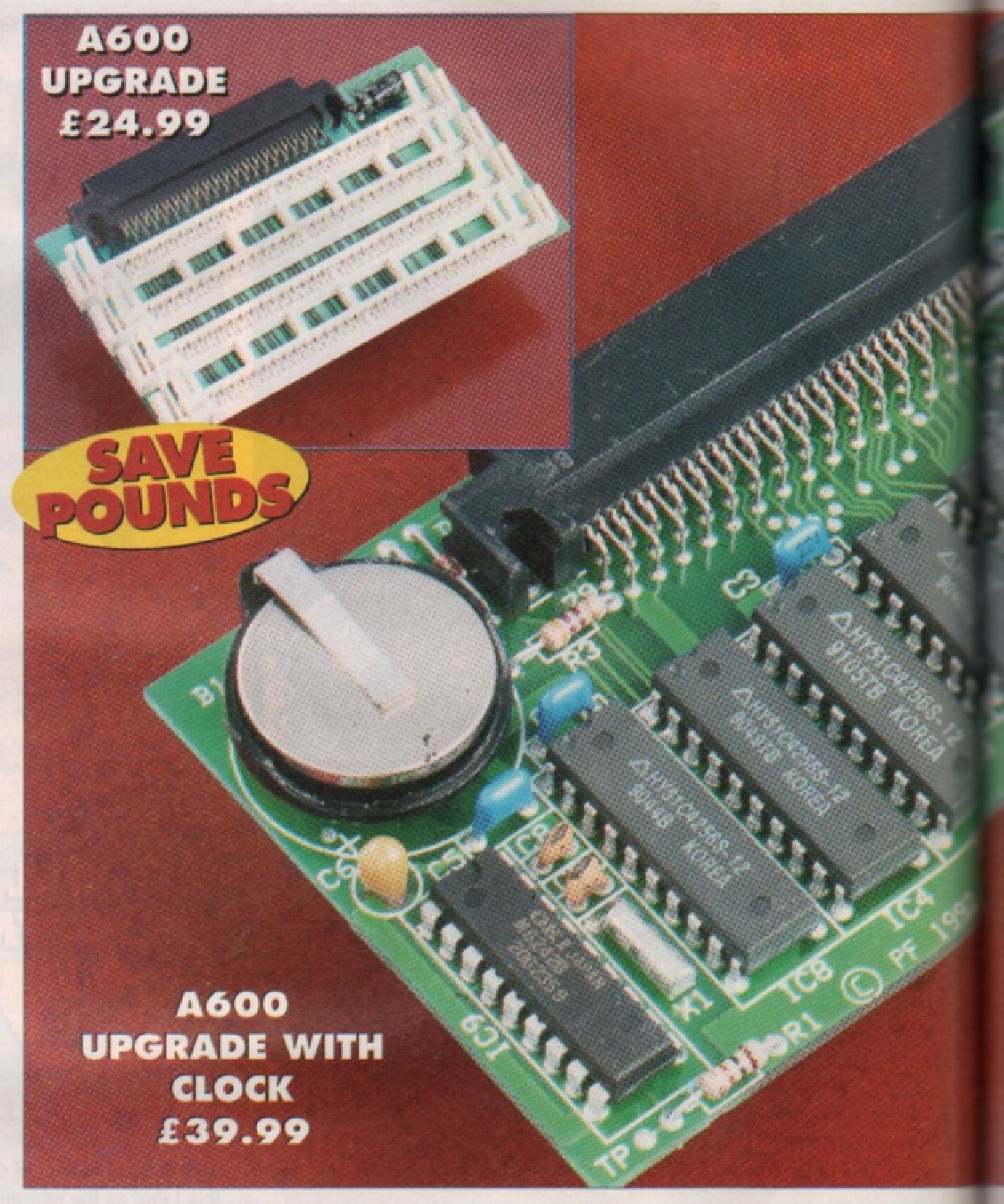
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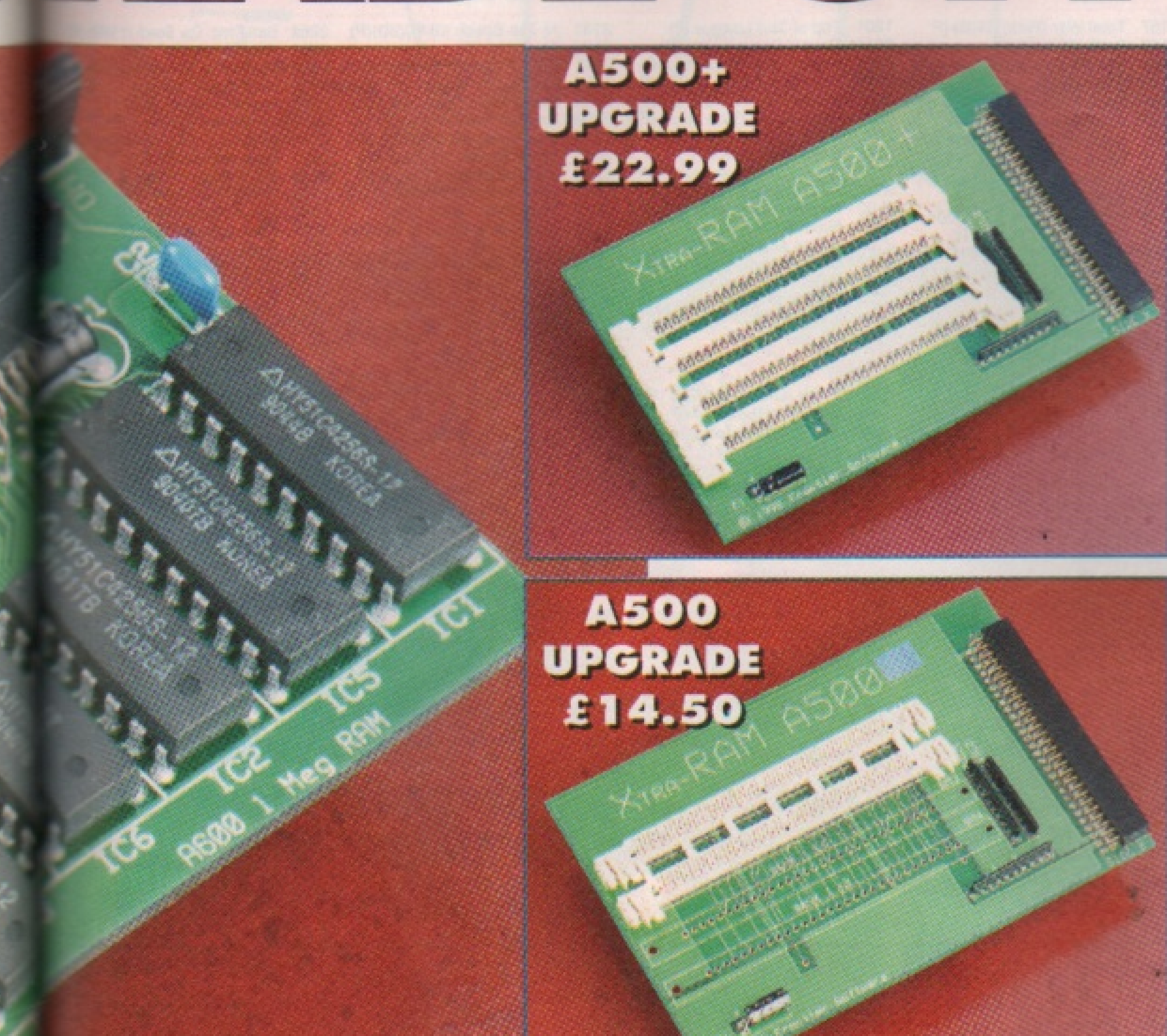
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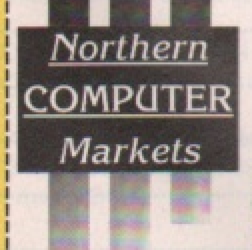
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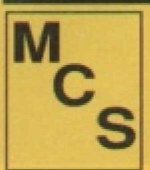
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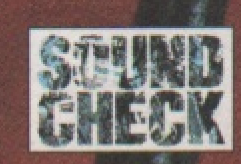
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ISSUE 6

JUNE 1993

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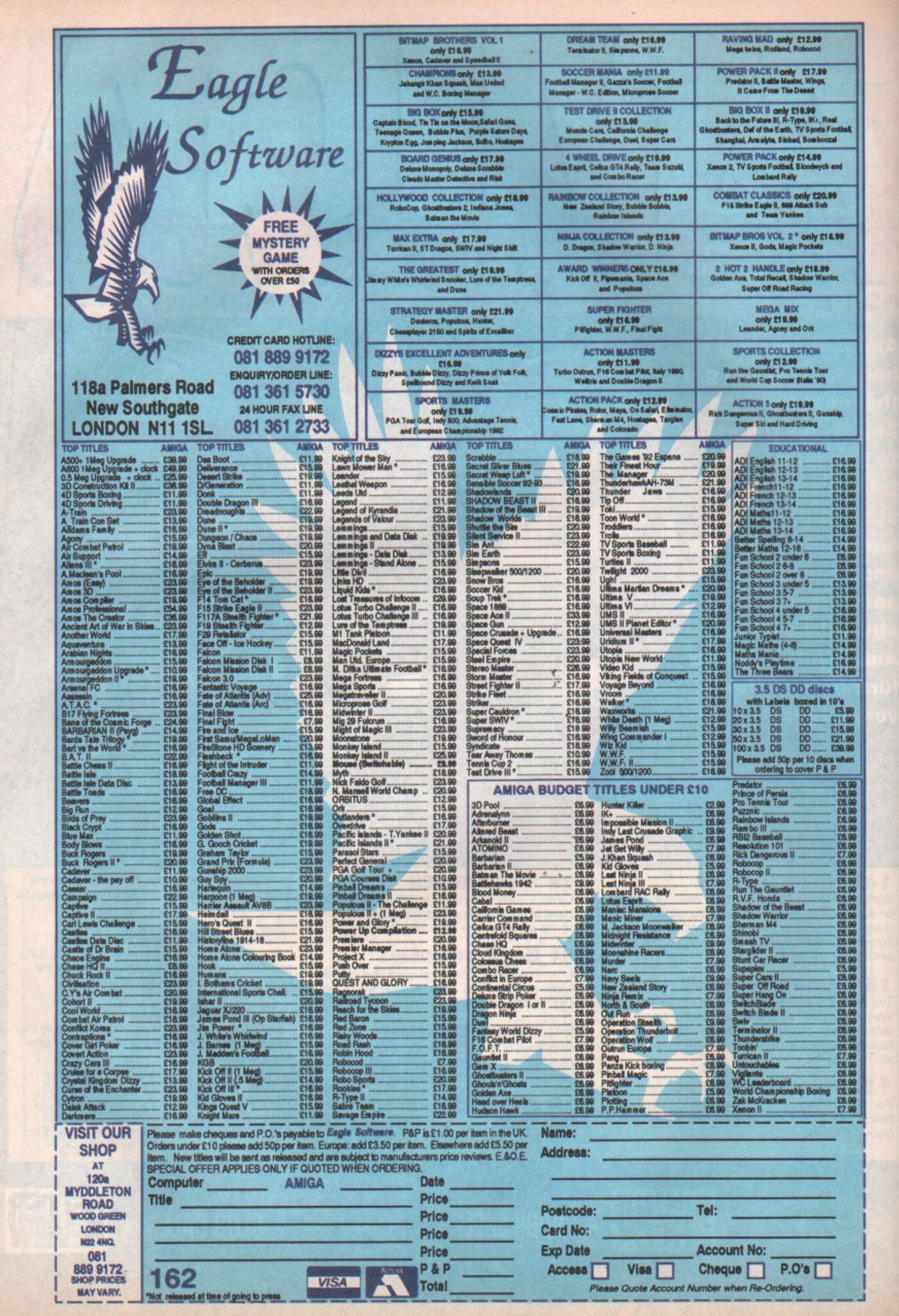


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LUGER/STUBBLEFIELD

There are a great many books which cover, or at least attempt to cover, the growing field of artificial intelligence. Many of them are either too vague or too difficult for the layman to break into. This book is one of the rare examples which isn't either.

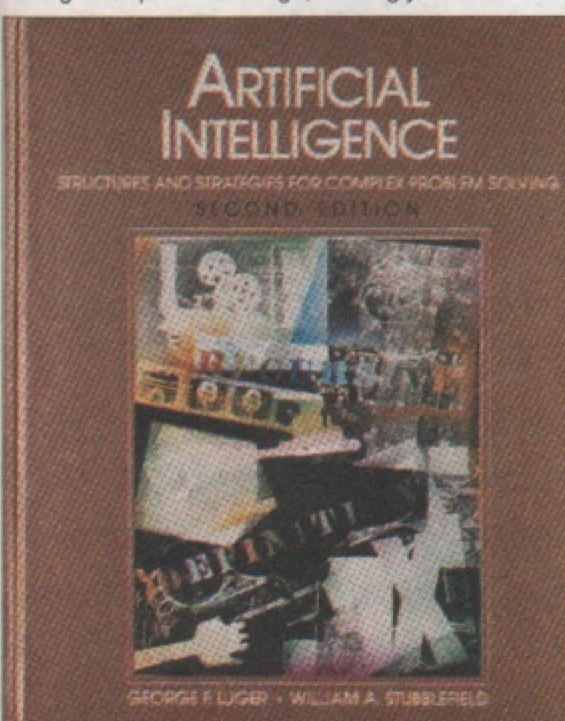
The introduction is a bit brief, giving a concise but very useful background to the science and history of thinking machines. After this the reader is hurled straight into the calculus of logic. A predicate calculus for emulating thought is derived and tested, with all the logical functions defined and proved from first principles.

The one important aspect of this book is that it deals with the logic of problem solving first, before looking at ways of representing this in computer code. This means that the calculus evolved is just as relevant to problem solving in the human brain as it is to the computer. The only trouble is that you have to be able to understand it.

This book is not for beginners. A background in mathematics and a reasonable programming knowledge would be very useful for anyone attempting to decipher the processes behind the algorithms discussed in the text. A thorough understanding of Boolean algebra is definitely a bonus when working through the first half of the book.

A detailed analysis of the mechanics behind heuristics, space searches, knowledge bases and genetic algorithms fill the 720 pages, accompanied by diagrams of varying degrees of usefulness. The only area of AI which has been neglected is fuzzy logic, which scarcely gets a mention. This is a bit of a shame as it is one area of AI which is becoming quite popular again, and could certainly do with some rigorous explaining on the programming side. However, a rather interesting section on Neural networks makes up for this.

Most of the algorithms are explained in terms of Prolog and Lisp, two languages specifically designed for AI applications. A book at this level is not going to bother about translating the listings into BASIC, but the code is really more to do with techniques than specific examples. If you have a version of Prolog or Lisp for the Amiga, I strongly recommend that you buy this book.



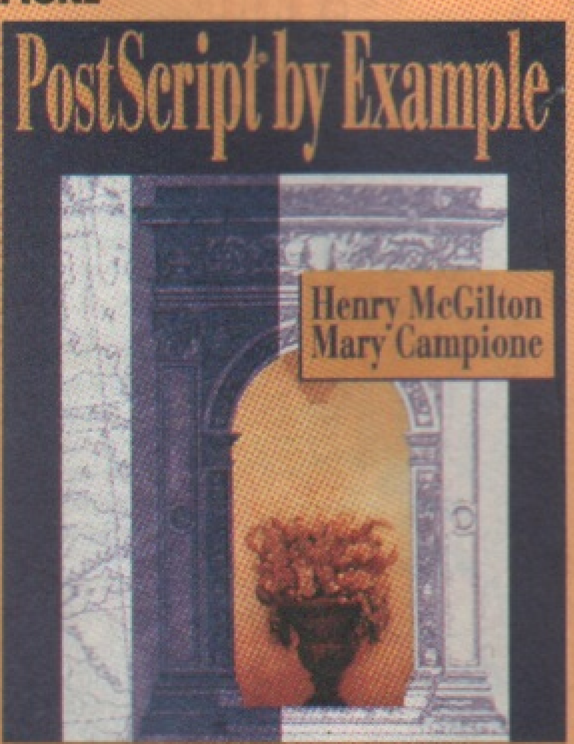
It is a bit on the expensive side, but considering the depth and scope of the book it is very good value. Because of its complexity though, it is difficult to recommend this book to anyone who is not a student in this field.

It does, however, achieve what it sets out to do though – examine the processes by which decisions are made and construct workable computer algorithms to perform the task.

ISBN 0-8053-4780-1
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POSTSCRIPT BY EXAMPLE

MCGILTON/CAMPIONE



A lot of people do not really understand the principles behind the Adobe Postscript standard. It is not just a different protocol for printing images, it is a different technique for storing and transporting them too.

Postscript is not really a file format (although there are file formats associated with it) but is more like a programming language in its own right. As with structured art, the images to be printed are defined not by a bitmap of data, but by mathematically defined shapes. It is a page description language, because the data is not a physical image in itself, but rather the instructions for how to generate that image. This makes the information more compact and more resilient to resolution changes, which in turn makes it very useful for any task which has a printer in it somewhere.

There are a number of books which deal with the format of the language and the structure of its commands. This is not one of those books.

Postscript By Example is more like a language tutorial, which explains how algorithms and routines can be constructed in this language. This may seem a bit daft to some people – after all, who wants to program a printer?

Well, actually, you could have a point there. But writing little pieces of code to print out graduated spheres is very educational. It's a bit like the American Apollo missions. The real end result was not a few nice Hasselblad pictures of the earth from a distance and people saluting the flag – the real achievement was Teflon, microprocessors and Pot Noodles (well, not all inventions end up being beneficial). So it is with this book. At the end you may be able to do some neat party tricks, but the important thing is that along the way you will have learnt a great deal about how the postscript system works.

The knowledge gained can give you a greater understanding of how the whole system works, from the origination software to the Postscript interpreters on printers. It could also be a useful programming technique for the future. The NeXt platform uses Postscript as a screen-display driver and other systems may follow, so anything you learn could be of great advantage later on.

Primarily though, this book is for the kind of people who have to completely understand something before they feel happy using it. Is your bedroom or workshop filled with little bits of clocks, a few PCBs from long-dead Acorn Atoms and enough leftover parts from knackered TV sets to keep a repair shop going for over a year? Then this is the book for you.

The pace of learning is well balanced and you will be writing your first Postscript program in less than 10 minutes. Advanced topics such as patterned fills, halftones, clipping paths and fonts are covered, but each discovery is preceeded by a well structured introduction to all the components necessary, so nothing comes as too much of a surprise. Even if everything goes wrong there is a section on writing your own error-handler to work out what the problem is. When you have finished this book you will understand Encapsulated Postscript and be able to write your own Postscript handling software, as well as being able to write in pure Postscript.

The more pedestrian aspects of fonts are explained, including the makeup of composite fonts (invaluable in Asian and Oriental countries) and explanations of some of the different formats. There are better books for explaining the font formats, but this is sufficient for anyone who isn't going to try and hard-code one themselves.

Actually, this book is not the definitive reference book for Postscript, but it is an excellent introduction – in fact, you may never need another Postscript manual.

ISBN 0-20163228-4
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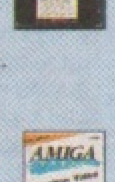
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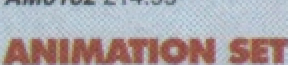
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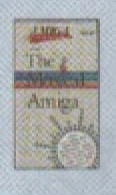
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VIDEO VAULT

Following our amazing video offer in last month's issue of CU, Tony Dillon gets all goggle-eyed over a sample of what's in store.

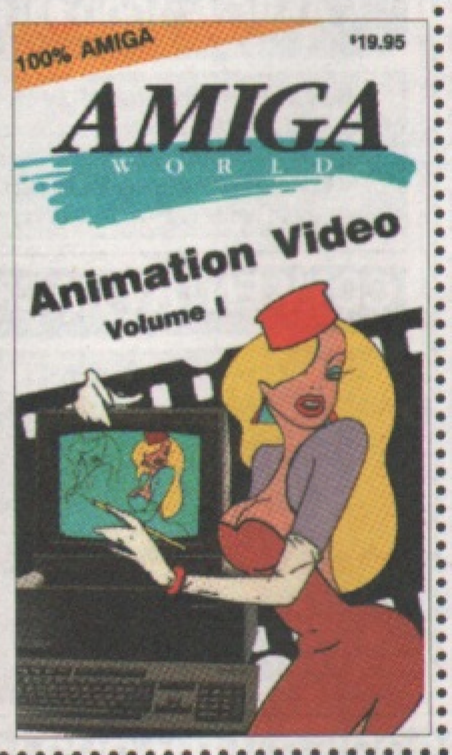
AMIGA WORLD ANIMATION VIDEO VOLUME 1/2

IDG VOL 1 - £10.99, VOL 2 - £14.99 (+£1.50 P&P)

Amiga World, one of the US's biggest selling Amiga magazines, has always given coverage to computer graphics. Now, in the form of these two 90-minute videos, comes the best of the best – *Amiga World*'s own collection of Amiga animations, and there are some scorchers here. Highlights include Tracy Sabin's treks into the weird and wonderful, Brad Schenk's unusual Off The Record, where a gramophone gets stuck in a groove, and the horn does everything it can to get playing again, and Bert Huntsinger's doomy 'Digital Frankenstein'. Get these, you won't be disappointed.

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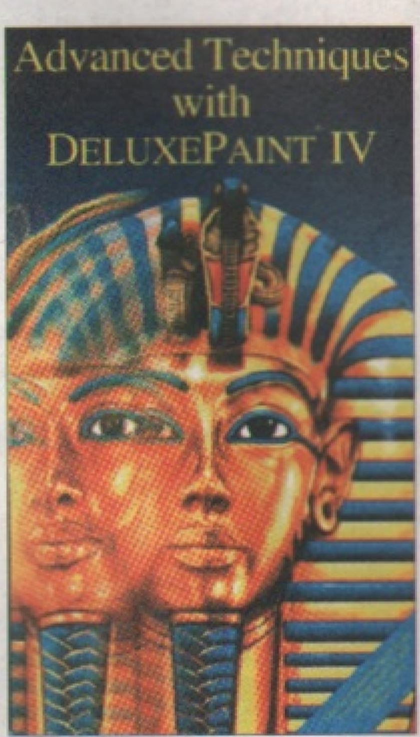
ADVANCED TECHNIQUES WITH DELUXE PAINT IV

SADDLEBACK £14.99 (+£1.50 P&P)

This 60-minute tape is the second in a series of videos from US company Saddleback Graphics and aims to teach the viewer a variety of tricks and shortcuts for creating professional looking graphics and animations. It does it brilliantly. From creating textured backgrounds to rotating highlighted globes that take five minutes to produce, this superb tape shows you everything you need to know. Surprisingly, even though the video is aimed at the slightly advanced *Deluxe Paint* user, it assumes no knowledge of the package, explaining all the key shortcuts and the functions of all tools used.

What makes the video so attractive is the stunning end effects created using standard *DPaint* images supplied with the program, so it's very easy to set up your Amiga and follow the on-screen action – something I was itching to do as soon as I saw the first examples. Also, the video doesn't assume that you only want to create flashy artwork. There are examples on how to make text more interesting, plus some detailed instructions on how to piece together pie charts and bar charts for business presentations.

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THE MAGIC OF MUSIC AND MIDI

RAZZA £12.99 (+£1.50 P&P)

The concept of MIDI is as simple to grasp as the basic idea of a mouse, yet most people find it too big to swallow. There are endless books and magazine articles that go into needless jargon which serve to do no more than convince the novice that they are entering something far beyond them. Anyone who has ever used MIDI knows only too well how uncomplicated it can be. This new video, from US Amiga video supremoes Razza, is supposed to be a complete guide to creating music with your Amiga, and getting into MIDI. I say supposed, because this video has gone in completely the opposite direction to the aforementioned books and gives almost no real information or advice. You have to worry when the opening lines are something along the lines of 'You probably know your Amiga has custom chips for creating graphics, but did you know it also has a chip for creating sounds?', and then goes on at great length to explain what a sample is and what samplers do, but doesn't actually tell you how to use them. The real information has been missed, and the 15-minute section on MIDI, which shows nothing more than a garage musician and a room full of cables can do nothing more than put people off the idea altogether. A poor product.

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THE AMIGA SERVICE AND REPAIR VIDEO

RAZZA £10.99 (+£1.50 P&P)

Not the snappiest of titles, but then again this ain't the snappiest of videos. If poking around inside your machine is your idea of fun, or you fancy yourself as a bit of a digital DIY specialist, then this is the video for you. Sixty minutes of dismantling, rewiring, cleaning and adjusting, none of which is guaranteed to work and all of which invalidates your warranty. But on with the show.

To all intents and purposes, this is really just a trouble-shooting guide, accompanied by a few hints and tips on fixing the most basic problems. If your Fat Agnes chip has died, this'll show you how to replace it. If your problem is a little more intricate, you're advised to send it off to be repaired. Possibly the best advice given on this tape is how to align your disk drive and the best ways to clean a mouse – my two biggest problems, so I'm possibly a little biased.

The presentation is sloppy and unprofessional for the most part. Shaking cameras, extremely poorly misspelt captioning (where is the Palua (sic) chip? How exactly can you 'distroy' (sic) a chip? Has the Amiga really got a 32-bit buss?). This is a good guide to the workings of the Amiga 500/2000 (no 600, 1200 or 4000?) but that's about all.

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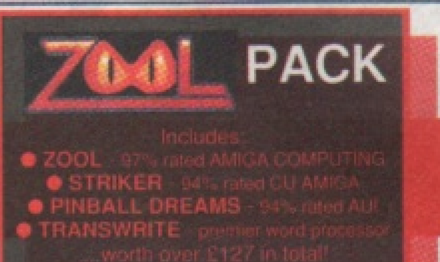
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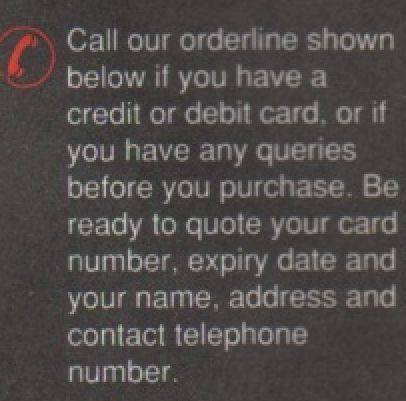
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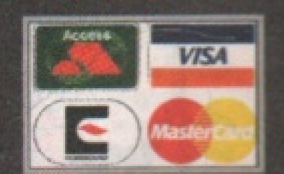
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Stone found the missing girl alright...
.. found her DEAD!

Noooo

Cartoons need text to convey the story and mood. Here a single screen captures a world of drama, with the text being central to the image. The word was [illegible] and outlined in perspective mode (see April's tutorial [illegible] of this effect). The images are from a set of [illegible] characters commercially available – how you use them is down to your imagination.

DELUXE P

PART 5

Is it a word processor, a database or a DTP program? Nope, just *Deluxe Paint*, which can imitate all these other types of program. How? Easy, says penny-pinching Peter Lee, who this month takes a look at staying on the write side of text ...

It may seem odd to focus on text in a series about what is possibly the world's hottest home graphics package. But look around – as far as computer art in the nineties is concerned, a picture may be worth a thousand words, but you sure as hell need the words at some point...

In almost any application where you use *Deluxe Paint* to create screen images, there's bound to be an opening for skilfully used text. Even if your sole aim in life is to construct a slideshow demo of your computer art, who gets the credit if you don't include a title or end credit screen? If you look at any kind of demo, the creators fall over themselves to say which dude did what, and usually in the brightest and most attractive way.

One interesting use of *DPaint* you may not have considered is as a kind of quick and easy graphic word processor; its ability to display hundreds of typestyles in many sizes alongside graphic images means you can create handbills, invitations and adverts.

Text handling in *DPaint* is probably one of the easiest functions in the program, so after a brief summary of what requester lives where, we'll be concentrating on how to get the most out of text once it's written.

WRITE STUFF

You can't miss the text requester on the *DPaint* toolbox – it's a big letter A. Clicking on the icon with the left mouse button changes the cursor to a text insertion bar, so that you can begin to type anywhere on screen where you click the cursor. Using the right button to click on the A icon opens up a requester which lists all the currently available fonts, the sizes they come in, and a Show button. Activating Show will display the currently selected font and size; the font can be emboldened, italicised or underlined by activating the appropriately labelled buttons. There is an upbeat side to font loading, and that's ColorText fonts. These are specially designed typefaces which include colour information in their definition. They are usually highly stylised – for instance wooden blocks, stained glass and chrome fonts are available – and demand their own palette changes to work. Before



ye are invited to partake of mead and vittels at a rare feasting due to be held at 3 york place on midsummer eve. be there, or be decapitated...

Sending out invitations has never been simpler (unless you prefer boring hand-written things). You can either send your Amiga pals a disk containing the invite, or, using our tips, shanghai *DPaint* as a DTP package and print out your work to incorporate the text and graphics. While *DPaint* doesn't claim to be capable of desktop publishing – as you can see, when you're on a tight budget, it does the business.



STRIKING VISUALS

Text boring? Not on the Amiga – if you can call on some clever tricks of the trade. Take this as an example – hollow text in which a large picture is held. In its own right it's striking enough, but once you know how to do it, you can incorporate the technique into animations, or use different images inside each letter.

Creating it is simple. First of all load in the image you intend to use, so that it's readily available and the colour palette is set. Now switch to the spare screen (keyboard j) and enter your text. You either need a large font size to begin with, or you should enlarge a text brush. Using a different colour from the actual text colour, outline the text brush (keyboard o). Call up the Stencil requester now, and make the text colour the only unprotected one, and activate the stencil. Switch to the picture screen, and cut out the image as a brush, and move back to the text screen. You will see that the picture only peeps through the text colour which is unprotected by the still-active stencil. You can position the picture 'behind' the hollow text to suit yourself now. De-activate the stencil and the job's done.



Hollow text allows a large image to be seen 'through' it, in this case our old friend King Tutankhamen. The effect is quite striking once the viewer realises what's happening. It also opens the way to a gee-whiz source of animation inside the lettering. Animation? Don't worry, that's going to be the icing on the cake of our series in a little while...

DPaint can load one of these fonts, a small program called *ColorText*, which comes with *DPaint IV*, has to be run (Workbench 2 users already have access to *ColorText*).

TIP: While *ColorText* fonts are very useful, it can be a bind to load them in after you've started a drawing, then find the palette needs to be altered to accommodate their true colours. In this case, switch to the spare screen, load the ColorText font with its own palette and type your text. Now cut out the text as a brush, swap to your drawing screen and restore its palette (it will have been altered when you loaded the text colours). Obviously your coloured text will look strange now, but by using *DPaint*'s Remap colour option, the program will try and match the brush's colour to the current palette. If this isn't an overwhelming success, try and find a few spare colours which you can use in the palette to simulate the colour of the *ColorText*, and try the procedure again. In HAM mode, this won't be a problem. And as always the answer is to plan your work and needs before hand as much as possible so you don't get caught in the trap to begin with.

The text tutorial is an ideal way of recapping previous tips and examples because, let's face it, raw text on screen is pretty grizzly; we need to use the power of *DPaint*'s graphics abilities to make it eye-catching.

SORRY, FRINGE ON TOP...

When using text brushes in Hold and Modify mode, one of the bugbears is fringing. This can occur when you move a brush around, and you see multi-coloured streaks down the edges. This is a feature of HAM, and it occurs if your brush uses colours other than those in the main palette of 16; one way around this – but one which slows brush movement – is to activate FastAdjust from the Prefs menu. This makes *DPaint* try to adjust adjacent colours. If you load a previously saved 32-colour or 64-colour brush into an existing HAM screen, the colours are automatically remapped to avoid fringing problems. You can override this, though, because the brush's palette is remembered, and can be invoked using the Use Brush Palette menu option under Palette.

BILLS OF FARE

Until I mentioned it at the start of the tutorial, it may never have crossed your mind to use *DPaint* as a DTP simulator. It's possible to do some really neat handbills using nothing but *DPaint*, a few sketchy lines, and the humblest of dot matrix printouts. I've had plenty of success with letterheads, address labels, invitations and the like. I've even used *DPaint* to draw up holiday schedules, calendars, and line graphs to illustrate manuals.

TIP: There are countless items of clip art available, both commercial and in the public domain. Clip art is the term given to drawings or images someone else has done, and has made available to a wider audience – like you and me. These are usually in black and white so are ideally suited to DTP needs, and they can liven up the saddest ad or invitation.



Left: Once upon a time... there was a striking way to begin a slideshow or presentation. This image uses medium resolution for greater clarity on the smaller-sized text. Using lower resolutions means chunkier curves, which just don't hack it for video titling or screen photography. The illustration was curved using the brush/bend/vertical option to give the illusion of being on an open page.

»

» *Right:* Massive lettering for massive symbolism. The letters making up USA were from a large font, stretched as a brush to give a monumental feel. Using techniques discussed in the Striking Visuals box out, I used a brush of Old Glory, the US flag, to fill the letters. To make the original flag brush move into the background, I used darker versions of the original colours to replace the existing red, white and blue.



Above: An old favourite which most people find quick and effective – the carved effect. To recap on the effect, which we covered in an early tutorial for a different subject: print your text and cut it out as a brush. With a light shade selected from the palette press F2 to turn your text brush into a solid colour, and paint it down. Choose a darker colour for the edge shadow and do the same, slightly offsetting the image a few millimetres below and to the left of the first brush stamp. Press F1 to revert to your original brush and paint it in position so one edge is highlighted (first brush stamp), and the other shadowed (second image).



As far as letterheads go, I'm not saying you should write a whole letter using *DPaint* – it's just not worth the aggravation. But putting your address on the top of a few dozen sheets of good quality (maybe coloured) A4 paper is a different matter. Look at it this way – you can have your name printed in grand style in the centre at the top of the page, with perhaps a graphic or company logo. Then after printing it out, you can re-feed it into the printer after you've composed a regular letter using a normal, basic wordprocessor which uses the printer's standard typeface. Adds a touch of personalisation to correspondence and gives a great sense of achievement.

TIP: More of a warning really.... I have both an Epson dot matrix and a Canon bubble jet printer. The Epson does a lovely job using the old ribbon method, but by its nature the Canon ink looks like mascara on a crying woman once it's wet.

IDEAS

You can create book covers by having a wide page, and then printing out horizontally. I've made a good stab at creating cartoons in *DPaint* too – initially as a screen display book, but then as hard copy by printing out the images. Here again, text figures prominently – with speech bubbles, sound effects and the like. Creating maps in *DPaint* is really straightforward, with the small in-built Topaz font ideal for labelling places of interest. CU

NEXT MONTH

We've skirted around the edges of this delicate topic, snuck up on it several times in passing and given it no more than a cursory glance; but in next month's instalment of our *Deluxe Paint* tutorial, Peter Lee will be slicing up the HAM mode and serving it to you on a plate. He'll be telling you how to get the most out of it, and how to go about carving up all those juicy special effects. Till then... avoid clichés like the plague...



An intro page for a sequence of cat pictures. *Deluxe Paint* makes life as simple as this ... well, purr-haps not.

STRAIGHT TALKING

The number of fonts available to users is overwhelming and sometimes you'll buy a disk full only to find that 80% are useless – Klingon script, knitted yoghurt boldface or the like. But remember that once text is entered you can impose all the clever brush manipulation tools on it. Your lines of text, once cut out as a brush, can be stretched, sheared, bent and used to fill all kinds of weird shapes.

Take the example of the lazy cat snoozing along the wall of text. You can't get a font which fits like that – so basically, you create it. I loaded in the largest font I had, then cut out the text as a brush; using the Stretch brush option I placed the ghosted brush under the cat's image, and stretched it so it fitted perfectly. You could also draw the shape you want to fill, and use the Fill requester's BRUSH option to have the program spread the text brush out to the area you've defined. This sometimes works OK, but I prefer the interactive nature of the brush stretch, because you can actually see how the text will look as it's being pulled and pushed.

TIP: The palette for the cat left no scope at all for anti-aliasing the text, which through stretching had the annoying jaggies around the edges. The answer was a compromise – but it fools the eye sufficiently; I picked intermediate colours to outline the stretched text brush manually (keyboard o), and this diverts the eye from the problem.

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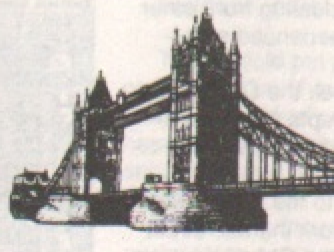


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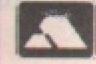


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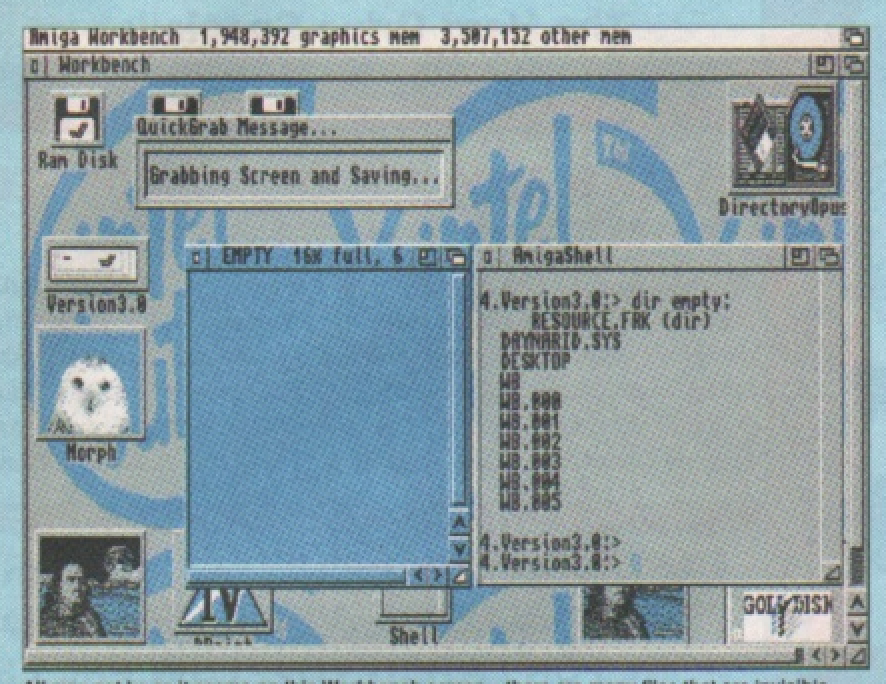
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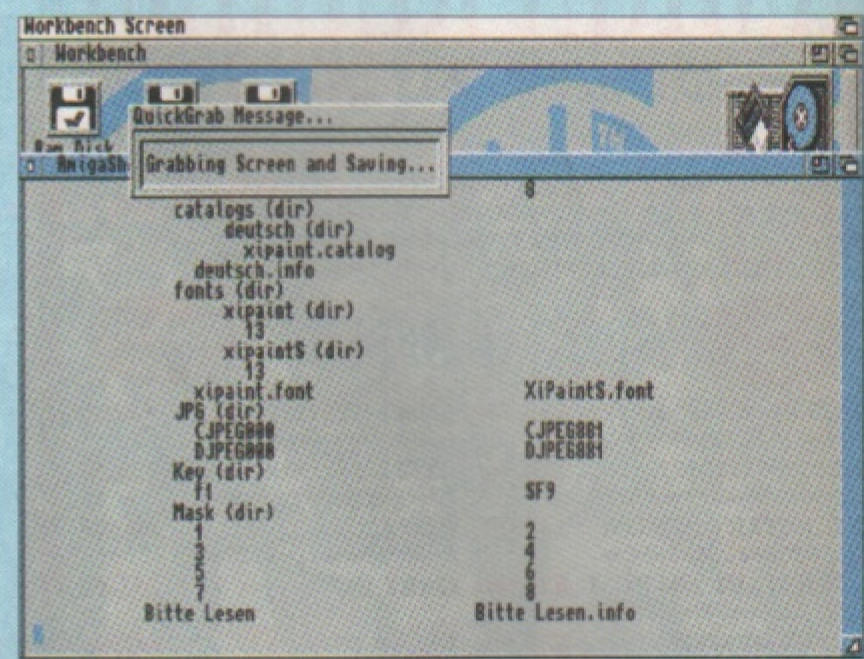
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All may not be as it seems on this Workbench screen – there are many files that are invisible except to the CLI (unless you have WB2.0 and 'Show all files' selected.



Adding parameters to often used commands can be very revealing. Every Workbench command has at least one optional argument.

WORKBENCH TUTORIAL

This month we take a look at some of Workbench's lesser known features.

PART 4

The interesting thing about the Amiga's Workbench is that there is a great deal of it which a large number of users have no idea exists.

There is a whole sub-strata of files and directories which are invisible from the standard WIMP system. These are the files that control things like the floppy drives, the Ram Disk, the serial port, the commands which are automatically executed on start-up and various other control and preference files.

A CLI FOR HELP

CLI is short for command line environment. This is a way of using the computer to perform tasks without using the mouse and all those icons and other girlie things. People graduating from other machines may have experienced something like the CLI before.

At the most basic level, the CLI is just an interpreter which accepts single commands as input and executes them when the return key is pressed.

This is rather similar to the way in which interpreted languages work in their 'direct' mode. So really, to use the CLI all you need to know is what the commands are and how exactly to use them.

On the Amiga, almost all of the CLI commands are actually stored as executable files on the Workbench disk. They live in a special directory on the disk simply called 'c'. Whenever you enter a command, the operating system first checks if the command is resident (explained later), then the current directory and finally the 'c' directory on the startup disk.

It is important to take this on board, because if there are two executable files with the same name (for example, different versions of the same command), then the one that is actually executed is the one that is found first. Be careful.

It is possible to extend this search to other directories by using the 'path' command. This is an easy command, for which the syntax is simply:

Path name1 name2 add

where 'name1' and 'name2' are the names of the paths you wish to search. These are full pathnames, including the device name. An example might be:

Path Extras:commands/new commands Ram:commands add

which would add the two named directories to the search. This is the reason why you are always asked to replace the Workbench disk when you are executing a command through the CLI, because the C directory that is contained on your startup-disk is automatically placed at the top of the list.

Add a query to your command and a list of indecipherable options can be yours.

IF THE SHELL SUITS...

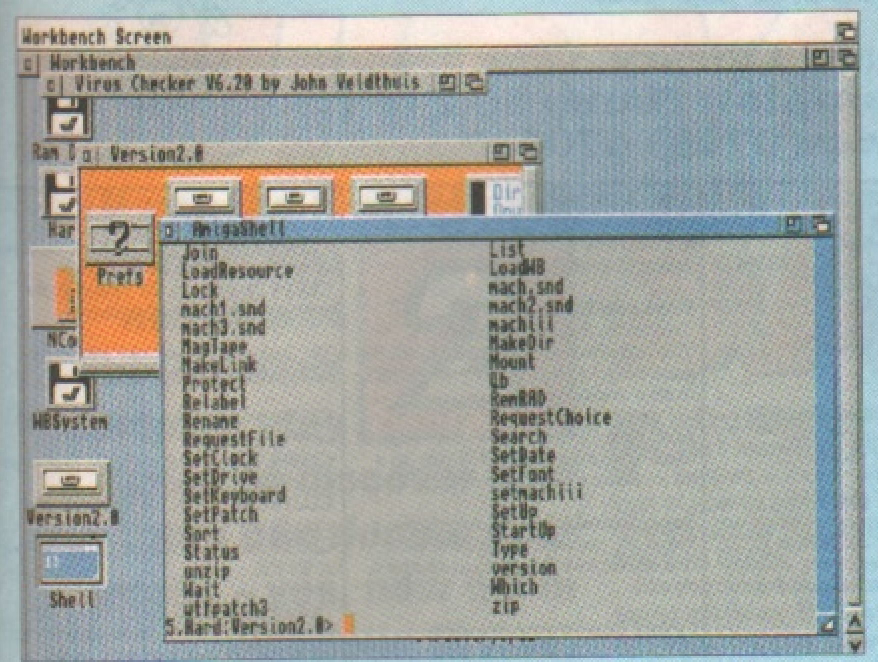
Since version 1.3 of Workbench, the CLI has had an alter ego called the 'Shell'. This is the interface most often used. There are several advantages of the shell over the old CLI, not the least of which is that it has a memory.

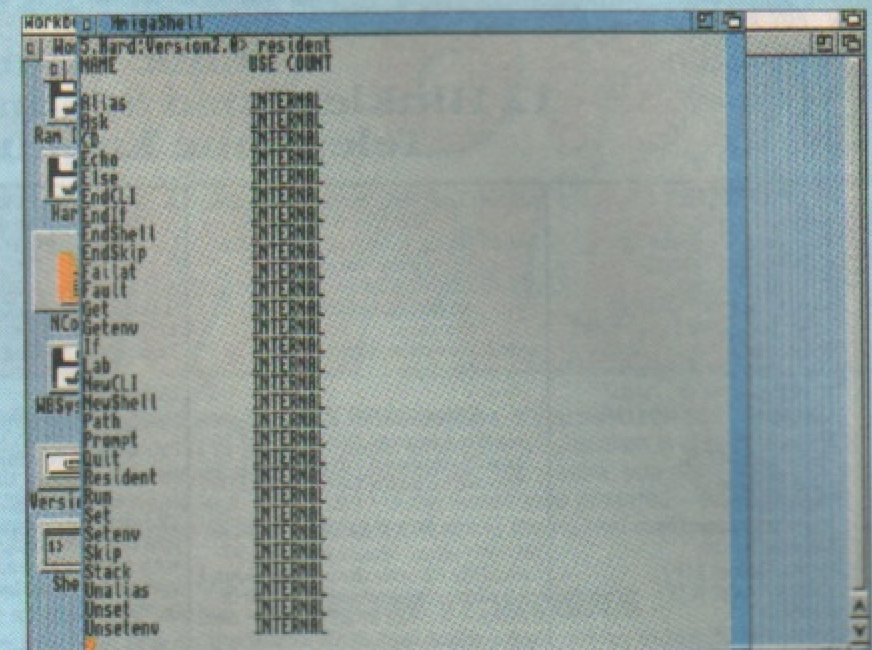
If you are typing in the Shell you can recall any previous line you have entered by pressing the cursor-up key (the arrow pointing up). This is extremely useful when trying to repeat multiple file operations. Another important difference to the shell is that you can edit the line as you enter it, using both delete keys and the cursor left and right keys. There is nothing more frustrating than getting to the end of a long pathname and discovering that you've misspelled the device name... especially if you then have to type the whole line again.

Another useful feature is the 'alias' command, another labour saving device. This allows you to define your own shortcut commands. The format is simple – the first parameter is the shortcut, the second is the full command. For example:

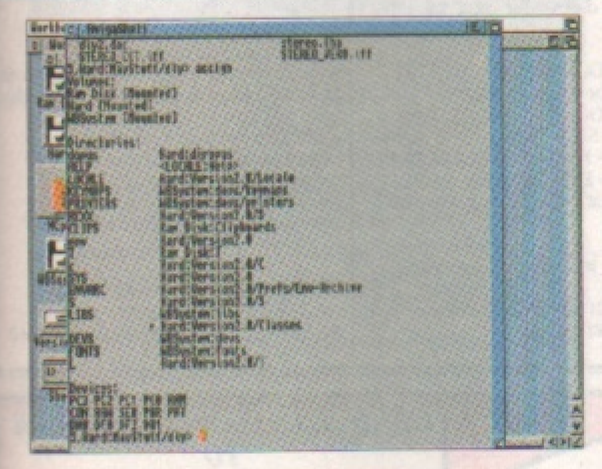
alias h cd hard:Hyperbook

would mean that every time you use the command 'h' in the Shell, you will end up in a directory called 'Hyperbook' on a device called 'hard:'.





Above: Nothing beats the CLI for speed and power. *Right:* The resident command can save a lot of time, not to mention disk grinding noises.



Left: Assigning a directory creates a logical device – useful for applications and invaluable for fooling games.

TAKING RESIDENCE

There are two major disadvantages to having commands stored on floppy disk. The first of these is that it takes rather a long time to load them – this isn't really a great problem if you are just doing a short session of file copying or some similar activity, but it can soon turn out to be a major nightmare if you are trying to reorganise your Amiga in a big way.

The second problem is that the disk with the commands on has to be almost perpetually in the drive. This makes things a little difficult when you try to copy things from one disk to another – especially if you only have one disk drive.

To get around this, since Workbench 1.3 it has been possible to make commands resident. This means that they are read in once and kept in memory for future reference, eliminating the need to read the disk again.

In order to make a command resident, simply use the 'resident' command thus:

resident c:list add

You should find that this will not work. Not all commands can be made resident – there are a lot of criteria which have to be filled, which are explained more fully in your Workbench manual. One of these reasons is that the file should be 'pure'. A lot of commands are very naughty indeed, but they can be forced into thinking they are pure for the purpose of being added to the resident list. Use the command:

resident c:list pure add

That should put an end to all of your purity problems. You should find that a number of commands are already resident. Some of these may have been made resident in the default startup-sequence, and some may be in ROM (in Workbench 2.0).

Just typing the resident command with no parameters or arguments will give you a complete list of the commands that are already stored in memory.

The resident list is the first place that Workbench will look for a command that you have typed in, i.e. if you change or replace the command in the current directory, this will have no effect until you restart or remove the command from the resident list.

DEVICES AND LOGICAL DEVICES

In the realm of the CLI, devices can be either physical (like a disk drive) or logical (like the 'c' directory). In either case, when used in a CLI command they are always denoted by having a colon, ':', after their name, e.g. DF0:, RAM:, C:, Devs: and so on.

Physical devices are rather easy to understand. Logical devices aren't actually much more complicated. A logical device is just a convenient fiddle to make accessing files easier. In the case of the 'c' directory, instead of using the pathname 'Workbench 1.3:c' you can just use the name 'c:'.

These logical devices are set up using the 'assign' command. It is used like this:

Assign Plopfactor: dh0:artwork/animations/WGMWWALL

The first parameter for the command is the name for the new device. Assign commands can be very useful for fooling software into working on a hard-drive too. Simply copy all of the program files from all the relevant disks onto a directory and set up logical devices with the same names as the original disks. As long as you remember to remove the originals before running the program it will be totally fooled and everything will work as usual (except a lot faster).

HELP!

One thing not often explained in the Amiga manuals is that almost all commands have a reminder prompt. Simply enter the command with a question mark as the only parameter. A load of gibberish will appear on the screen, but closer inspection will reveal that they are all abbreviations for the assorted arguments that can be given to that command – a sort of miniature on-line help.

A QUESTION OF DIRECTION

A lot of people don't realise that it is possible to redirect the output of any command into a file or to any device connected to the machine. All that is required is that you append the command with the redirection marker and supply a destination. This may not seem terribly useful, but consider the following examples:

dir dh0: all > PRT:x
(which will print out a complete directory of the hard drive)

type text >speak:x
(which in WB1.3/2.0 will read a text file to you)

date >speak:x
(a talking clock!)

Remember that it is not only the result of the command that is redirected, but any echoed messages which may occur while the command is operating. By redirecting a command to the NIL: port, you will effectively silence any undesired output from a command

Unfortunately, this can cause problems. If an error occurs (maybe a file which is needed has been accidentally deleted or something) it may be impossible to recover from it – the Nil: device provides no input from the keyboard.

For example, instead of getting a directory in the normal way, try typing 'Dir ?'. You should get the response:

DIR,OPT/K,ALL/S,DIR/S,FILES/S,INTER/S:

OK, so it doesn't really make much sense, but it is giving you hints as to the options you might want to choose. Try typing 'all' and pressing return. You will get a directory as before, but this time the contents of any subdirectories are listed as well.

The suffix of '/S' indicates that the keyword is a switch and turns some feature on when present. '/K' indicates that a value is expected. You may use more than one of these options at a time to give a combined effect.

Most commands will give you some information when executed with the '?' parameter, even those which are not part of the AmigaDOS system. Many PD programs return information in this way. CU

NEXT MONTH

Well, now you know a little bit about the CLI and the Shell, next time we'll be looking at some commands in detail and also how to edit your startup sequence.

BUILD YOUR OWN SAMPLER

PART 2

If you Did It Yourself last month and built a sound sampler, stay tuned to discover how you can double your inputs – yes, now it's in glorious Stereo!

A WORD OF WARNING

Although this project has been built and tested, neither the author nor CU AMIGA can be held responsible for any damage which may be caused as a result of using it.

As no mains voltages are required in this circuit, it is unlikely that you could electrocute yourself, but you should still take care. If your computer does not behave normally when the project is connected, switch off immediately. Check the circuit carefully for short circuits and wiring deficiencies. Always add or remove the parallel port connector with the computer switched off.

Never leave the soldering iron unattended, and always switch it off when not in use. Try to wear protective eye-gear when soldering and use a vice or clamp to hold the circuit in place. Never splash hot solder around.

Flicking through the magazine advertisements, you'll know that sound samplers come in two flavours – mono and stereo. This month we'll look at how to adapt the sampler we made last time into a fully fledged stereo system: and all for less than £1.00!

In theory, there are two ways of sampling a sound in stereo. The first method is to use two Analogue to Digital convertor chips, one for the left and one for the right audio signals. This technique produces the best results, but obviously doubles the cost of the circuit: ADCs aren't cheap.

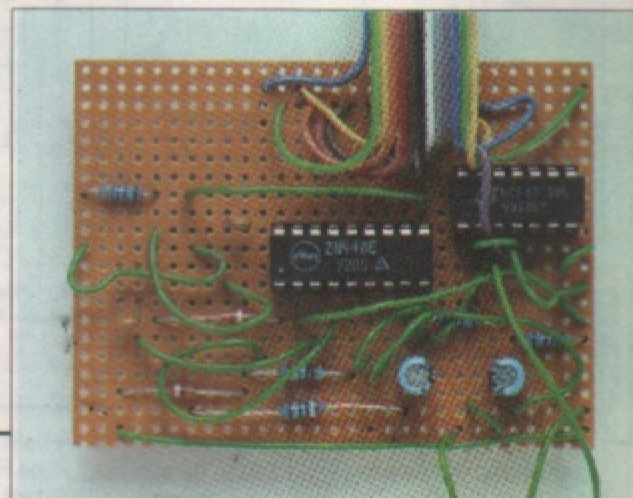
The second method uses a switching chip which takes it in turns to re-direct the left and right audio signals into the ADC. The switching chip is synchronised with the ADC by using some more control lines from the parallel port: most Amiga sampling software will do this automatically.

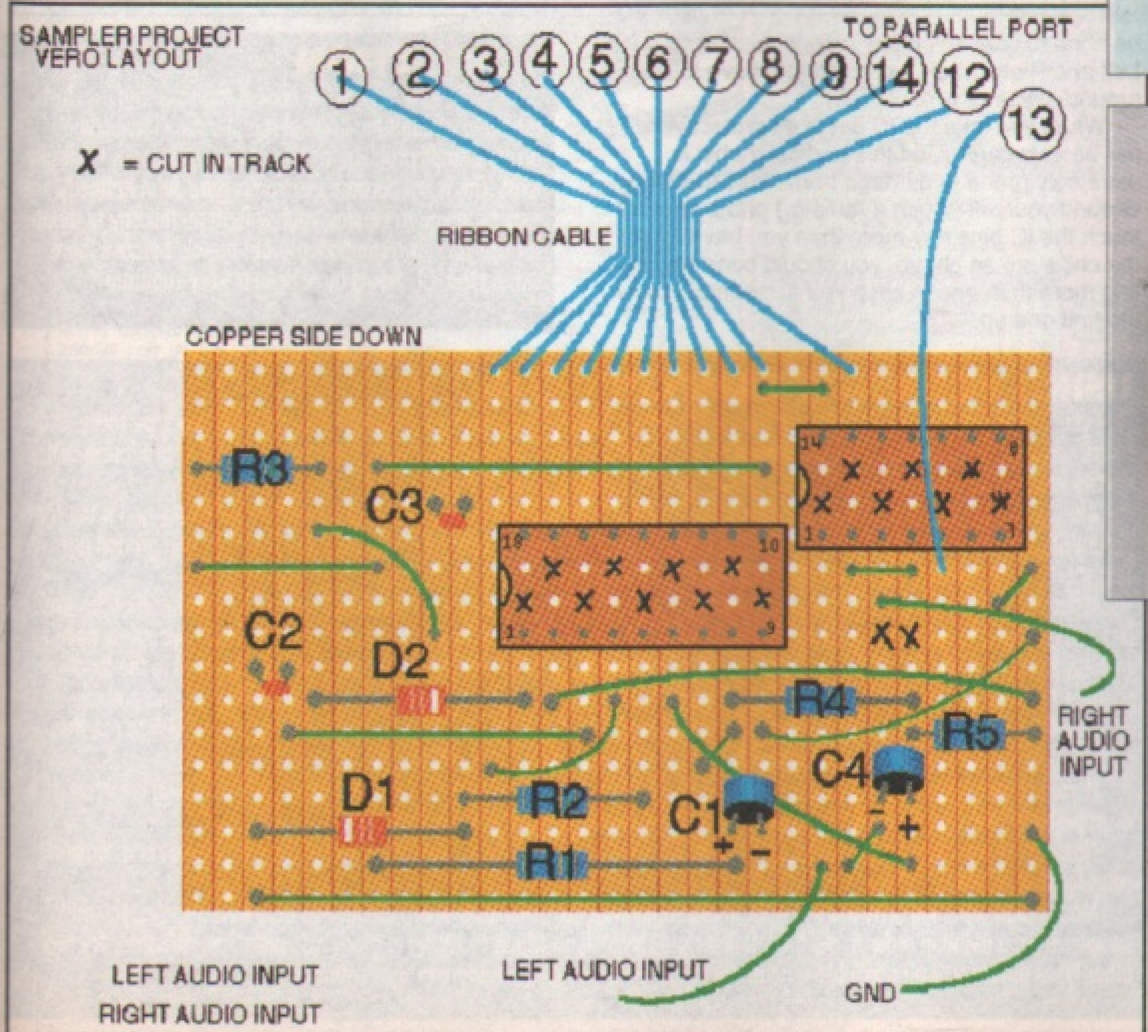
The ability to sample in stereo isn't really much more than a gimmick. Furthermore, as we'll be using the second method which entails piping the sound through another chip, this can only result in a slight loss of sound quality. The bottom line is that for best quality sampling, you should stick to mono. Incidentally, this applies to most commercially available budget samplers as well.

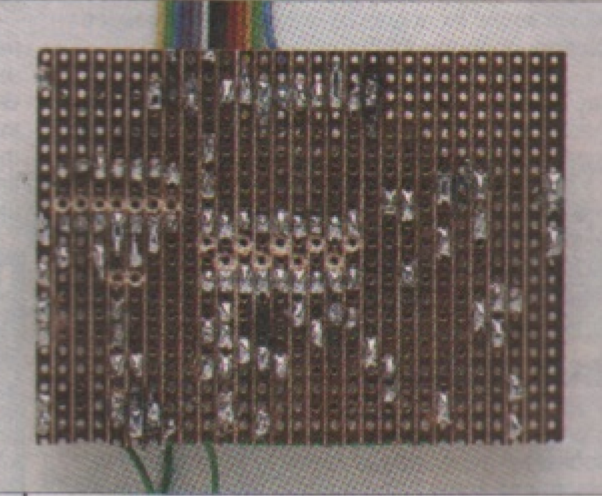
Nevertheless, if you need stereo to capture a special effect, the modification is simple enough to be worthwhile. Even better, you don't have to choose between mono or stereo – you can have both by retaining the normal mono input.

HOW IT WORKS

A stereo audio signal comes in two parts – left and right. To choose between the two signals, we use a chip called an Analogue Switch. This chip acts just like a miniature relay, but operates much faster and consumes negligible power.





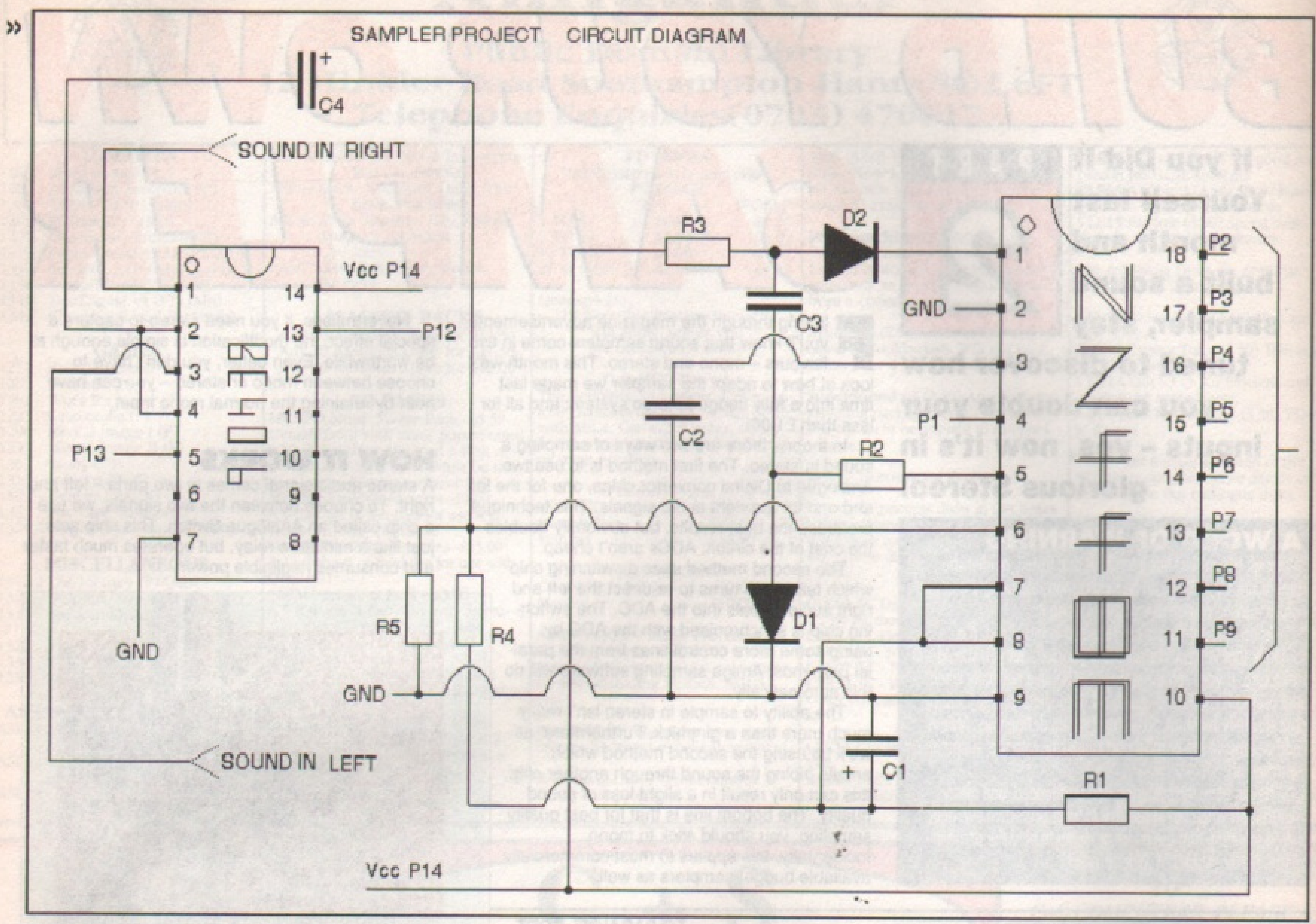


Left: **The Vero layout is rather uncomplicated, but make sure that all the tracks are broken clearly.**

THE PARTS YOU'LL NEED

- 14pin IC socket
- 4016BE analogue switch (Maplin's order code QX08J)
- Connecting wire
- An extra phono socket, or a stereo jack lead to connect audio source.

Note: if you are trying to build this circuit from scratch, please refer back to last month's issue of CU AMIGA for more details.



Both sound inputs are connected to different input pins on the chip. Two other pins are connected to the parallel port, and these determine which sound input is to be output, and so passed on through to the ADC.

The two outputs from the switch are combined (as only one will be active at a time) and connected to the ADC in the same way as the original mono signal.

The ADC then digitises the sound, and passes the result back to the Amiga along the ribbon cable to the parallel port. For more details on how the ADC works, please refer back to last month's DIY special.

BUILDING IT

If you stuck to the veroboard layout used in last month's DIY corner you'll be laughing. The IC socket for the analogue needs to be soldered in place, and some holes made in the copper tracks. Then you need to solder in a few wires to provide power, a ground and sound inputs and output – and that's all there is to it!

Of course, now you'll need two phono sockets or a stereo jack to provide the two-part audio signal. The ground between the two signals will be common, so there will only be three wires coming from the sampler board.

You will need to add two more lines to your ribbon cable to select left and right audio. These connect to pins 12 and 13, and they are then soldered to the circuit board beside the switch IC at pins 5 and 13.

Check the veroboard layout picture against your circuit to get the wires in the right places. To be honest, I haven't been very consistent with the Left and Right labels, so you might have to swap around a wire or two.

When you take the IC out of its protective wrapper be very careful, as this particular chip is extremely prone to damage from static electricity. Ground yourself (touch a radiator) and try not to touch the IC pins any more than you have to. As the chips are so cheap, you should consider getting more than one in case you accidentally blow the first one up. CU

CORRECTION

Any of you who braved the heat of the soldering iron last month to attempt the original sampler may have come across a small problem, as one of the parts doesn't actually exist. This is not because electronics guru John Kennedy was expecting you to employ your skills at metallurgy to manufacture your own components, but merely because there was a typo. C1 should have been a 47μF capacitor.

USING YOUR NEW SAMPLER

First you'll need some sampling software from a PD library. Several packages are available and all should work perfectly. If different samplers are supported, select 'generic'. Some programs work better than others, even to the extent of producing better quality samples, so shop around.

After giving the circuit a final check, switch the Amiga off and connect the parallel plug connector. Switch on, and if the computer doesn't boot as normal switch off at once. Check the pin numbering carefully, especially the five volts and ground pin. Any short circuits could cause the Amiga to continually reset and possibly cause damage.

When everything is working normally, load the sampling software and connect the sound source. Remember that this project was designed to connect directly to the headphone out socket of a small battery-powered cassette deck – you may need to make alterations to the circuit if you are connecting it to something different. On no account connect the circuit to the loudspeaker terminal of a mains hi-fi! The power of the hi-fi will instantly dispatch the A/D chip to Silicon Heaven and possibly damage the hi-fi as well. Use only the headphone socket of cassette decks, amplifiers and CD players. If you wish to use the audio out Phono connectors, you will probably need to alter the value of the resistors R4, R5.

If your chosen sampling software has a monitoring option, use it to determine when the input volume setting is correct. If it is set perfectly, the signal will fill the display, without overloading and so possibly distorting.

Now set the sampling frequency to about 8KHz for starters, and sample! Experiment with different volumes and sampling rates for best results.

Most Amiga sampling software will work immediately with the sampler in stereo mode. You may have to select the make of sampler from a menu in order to get the left and right channels switching correctly, in which case pick 'SoundMaster'. Try any other types if this sort isn't available – none will damage the sampler hardware or the computer.

PART 3

This month Dave Smithson continues in his ongoing quest to bring the late, great PacMan back from the dead. See him walk, see him talk and see him gobble (!) – all in Super AMOS Vision!

GAMES PROGRAMMING MADE EASY



Programming can be very rewarding at times, but it can also be very frustrating. This month's code is a good example of this – when I first embarked on this particular coding session, I expected to have everything up and running within an hour or so. It actually ended up taking more than two days to complete.

Before you gasp in horror and think that this is all getting too difficult, it's worth knowing that the code itself wasn't all that complicated. The point is that every coder gets a mental block occasionally – so don't despair if it happens to you. Just take a break and come back to it later refreshed.

Right, with that little lesson out of the way, after successfully getting the PacMan Map array and screen from last month up and running, this month we will turn our attention to the first part of the main game loop – the routine that controls and displays good old PacMan himself. If you're the sort of person that plans these things well, then you should already have defined a bank of PacMan objects using the AMOS Sprite Editor, so I'll dive straight in with a look at the code required.



BACK TO PAC

The aim of the routine that we'll be covering this month is to monitor the player's joystick and move the PacMan blitter object around the screen accordingly. Obviously PacMan isn't allowed to walk through walls, so we'll also need to keep careful control over where he can and can't walk. While we're doing all this we may just as well add in the code required to get PacMan to eat the little yellow dots and power pills scattered around the maze. We won't actually be worrying too much about the effect of power pills at the moment, but it's still worthwhile adding in the foundations at this early stage.

You are probably already starting to appreciate that moving PacMan around the screen isn't quite as simple as it first seems. What originally seemed to be a single, simple task has turned into something much more complex. It can best be viewed by breaking the routine down into smaller, more manageable chunks, like those shown in Table 1.

Obviously this pseudo code is somewhat simplistic. After all, simply moving PacMan from one 16x16 square to another will produce some rather jerky movement. We also need to animate the PacMan BOB and at the same time keep a careful eye on its orientation. After all, PacMan would look rather stupid if he were looking right but moving left, wouldn't he!

PAC UP AND GO!

At the end of this article you will find the complete source code for the _MOVEPACMAN procedure that I wrote to handle the steps covered above. You will find that this code won't actually do a lot on its own – it's simply published within these pages to give you the bare bones of a routine that you can build upon yourself.

So what do all those lines of code do? Well,

SMOOTH CHARACTER

One of the hardest parts of the _MOVEPACMAN routine was the section of code that allowed PacMan to move smoothly between blocks. Without this code, though, he would appear to jump from block to block – hardly the sort of polished professionalism that we're after.

The little section of code that you see at the start of the procedure (just look for the '** Smooth Scroll' Remark) keeps careful check on the status of both the PACXPIXEL and PACYPIXEL variables. If either of these are different from the DESX and DESY variables, then the routine automatically assumes that PacMan is still moving and therefore further movements should not be allowed. It therefore stops the routine from checking the player's joystick and simply adjusts the position of the PacMan BOB to bring it two pixels closer to its final destination. Once this destination is reached though, the player will be free to move PacMan again.

You may well think that this would cause PacMan's movement to become rather jerky, but you'd be surprised just how well this routine actually works. Although it's far from perfect, it does get the job done. Have a go at modifying it yourself though – even at the simplest level, you can change the speed at which PacMan moves simply by increasing or decreasing the amount that the PACXPIXEL and PACYPIXEL variables are altered by.

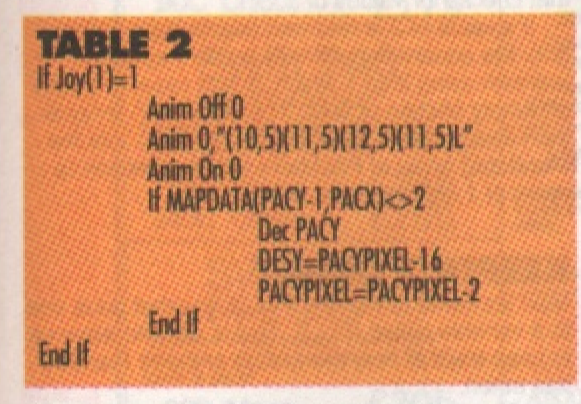
TABLE 1

```
        Read the player's joystick
        Is PacMan allowed to move in that direction?
        If Yes, then
        update his position
        Is there a yellow dot or power pill here?
        If Yes,
                Update Score
                Play 'gobble' sample
                Remove dot or pill graphic
                End If
Else
        Leave him where he is
        End If
```



take a closer look at it and you'll realise that it's actually quite straightforward. The entire routine consists of a series of nested decisions that help to keep it running as fast as possible. Decisions usually take time to execute, but they're used here to ensure that only the sections of code that are needed are performed.

The first thing that the routine does is to check whether the DESX and DESY variables are different from two variables called PACXPIXEL and PACYPIXEL. These last two variables contain the current X and Y position of the PacMan blitter object. DESX and DESY, on the other hand, hold the X and Y position that the PacMan Bob is moving to. The first time that this routine is run, this test will prove false because DESX and DESY will be the same as PACXPIXEL and PACYPIXEL

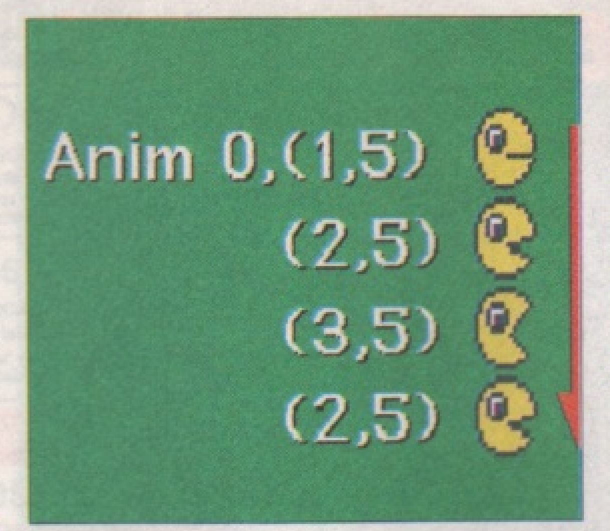

TABLE 2

```
If Joy(1)=1
        Anim Off 0
        Anim 0,"(10,5)(11,5)(12,5)(11,5)L"
        Anim On 0
        If MAPDATA(PACY-1,PACX)<>2
                Dec PACY
                DESY=PACYPIXEL-16
                PACYPIXEL=PACYPIXEL-2
        End If
End If
```

(PacMan won't have actually moved).

Because the test was proven false, the routine will move onto code held within the 'Else' part of the test. This rather large section of code is quite deceiving – although it looks very long, only a quarter of the code is ever performed. If you study it carefully, you'll notice that it breaks down into four separate tests, each of which checks the status of the joystick by reading the value returned by the Joy(1) function. One of those tests is shown in Table 2 (above).

In this case, the test is true if a value of 1 is returned. The Joy(1) function returns a different value depending upon what direction the joystick is being pushed in. Although most digital joysticks only offer four different directions, the Joy(1) function also keeps track of the status of the fire buttons and can even handle diagonal move-



Although not as advanced as AMAL, AMOS's STOS-compatible animation commands provide a quick and easy method of controlling object animation.

ments. We're only interested in up, down, left and right movements which means checking for the following values.

1 = UP
2 = DOWN
4 = LEFT
8 = RIGHT

If the test is found to be true, the code held within the IF...ENDIF construct is executed. The first three instructions alter both the orientation and the animation of the PacMan BOB. Because we have already defined a set of objects consisting of three frames of PacMan facing up, down, left and right, we can change both his animation and orientation in one foul swoop using the 'Anim' command.

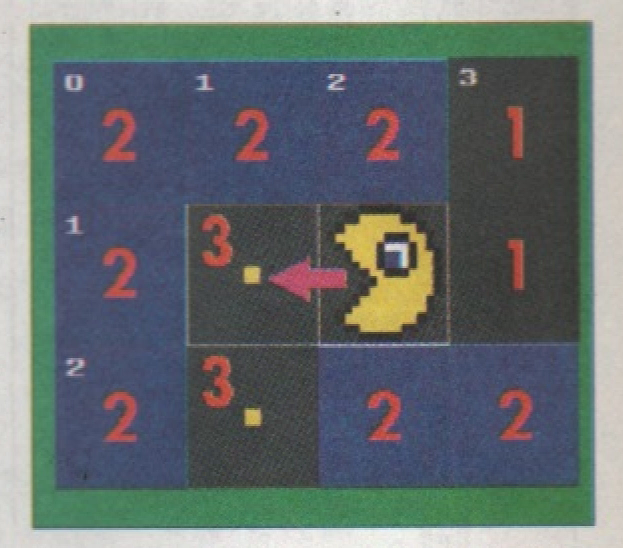
You're probably wondering why we don't use AMAL instead of the rather geriatric STOS-compatible Anim command. Well, it's all down to simplicity really. The Anim instruction may not be that capable, but it gets the job done with a minimal amount of fuss.

What's more, we don't have to write some incredibly complex AMAL program that we probably won't be able to understand in a couple of weeks anyway! Anim provides a quick and direct method of sprite and bob animation that suits our needs perfectly.

PAC LUNCH

Right, now onto the juicy code. And, surprise, surprise, it starts with a test using our old friend the IF...ENDIF construct. This time, though, the construct is used to test whether the movement that the player has requested (using their joystick) is actually legal. In order to do this, we need to retain two variables – PACX and PACY – that keep track of PacMan's position within the mapdata() array that we defined last month. By default, PacMan always starts every game at x/y position 9,8 and therefore PACX starts life set to 9 and PACY is set to 8.

What part of the mapdata() array is checked depends entirely upon the direction that the player is trying to move to. If he tries to move left, then the square immediately left of PacMan's current position is checked. Instead of checking the screen though, we simply consult the Mapdata() array by taking 1 away from PacMan's current X (horizontal) position. If PACX equalled 10 and PACY equalled 7, we would therefore be able to check whether a movement to the left were legal simply by checking the value held at mapdata position 9,7.



We check whether PacMan's movement is legal by checking the values held within the Mapdata() array.

For a movement to the right, we would increase PACX. The theory is exactly the same for vertical movements too – add one for down and subtract one for up.

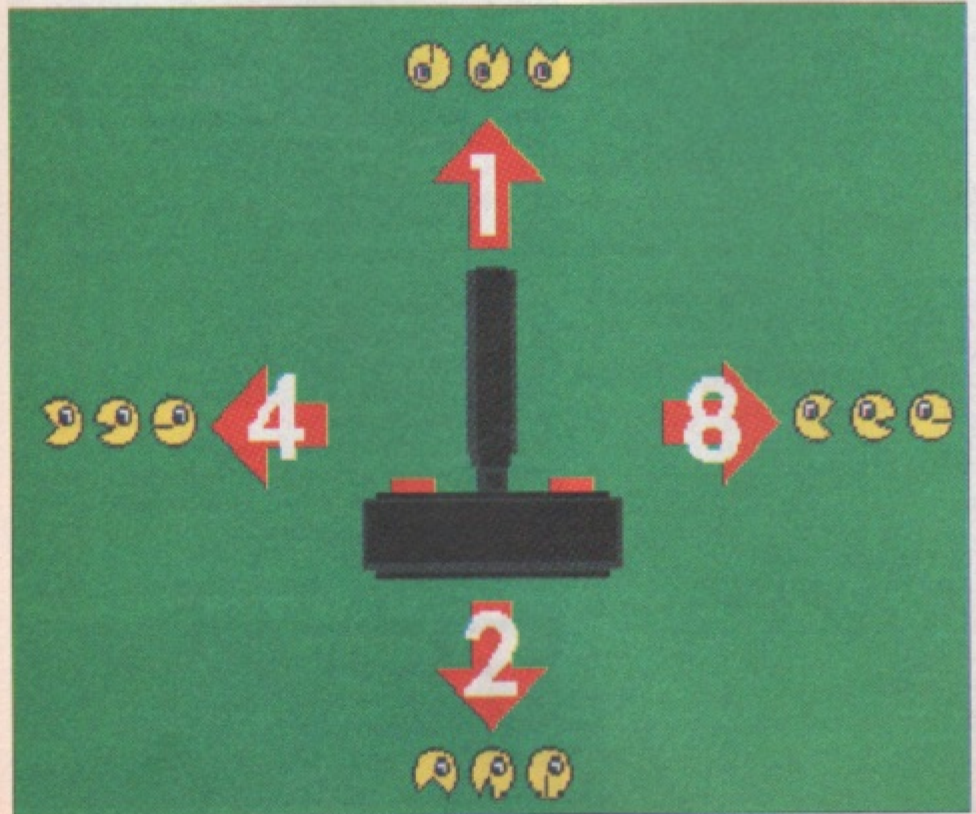
We can find out whether the movement is legal by checking whether the value held within the mapdata() array is 2. If it is, then the player is trying to walk poor old PacMan through a wall. If it's anything other than 2 though, PacMan can quite legally move. In order to move him, three instructions must be executed.

GRADUAL PROGRESSION

We start by adjusting PacMan's current position within the Mapdata() array by altering either the PACX or PACY variables accordingly. Once this is done, the position that PacMan will move to is found by either subtracting or adding 16 to his current X or Y position (according to the direction that he is to move in!). We then adjust his current screen position and the process is complete.

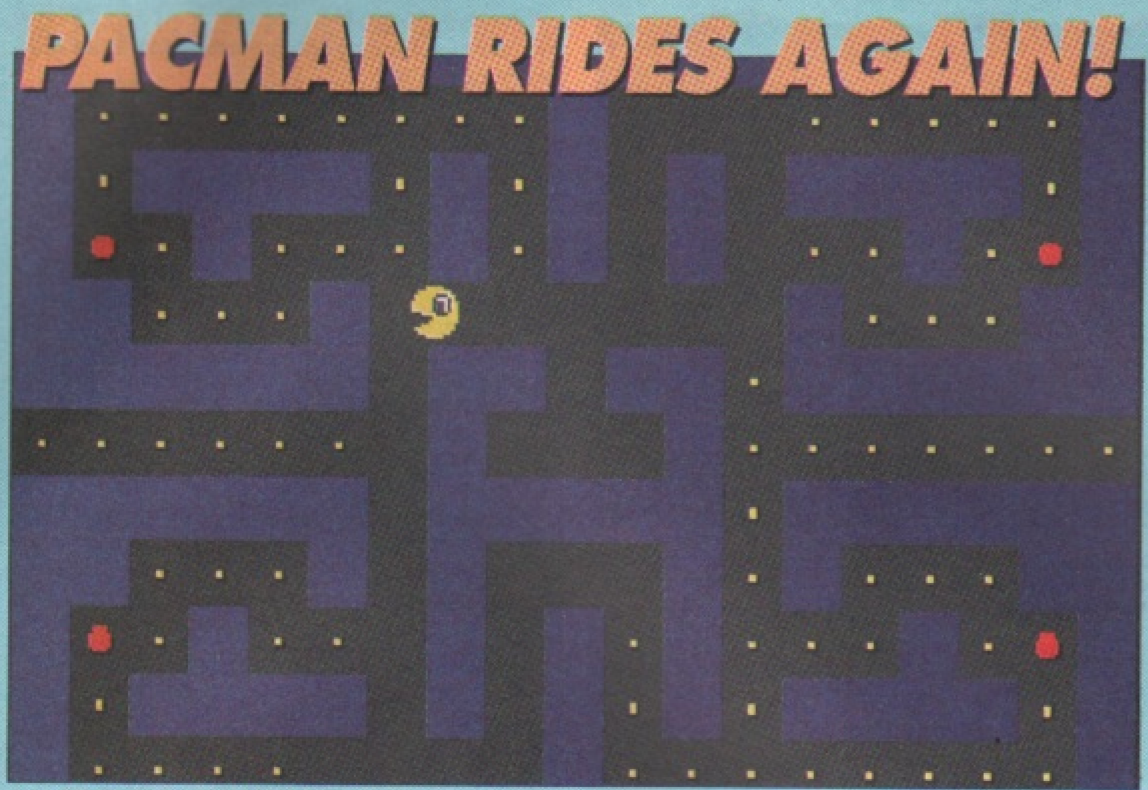
PAC TO THE FUTURE

Finally we move onto the _CHECKFLOOR procedure that, perhaps not altogether surprisingly, is used to check whether PacMan has walked onto a section of floor that contains either a power pill or »



The PacMan objects are changed according to the direction of the joystick.

PACMAN RIDES AGAIN!



Left: Here's our *PacMan* game so far. Although we have yet to add in the ghosts, you can see that it's already starting to shape up quite nicely.

Here's that code in all its AMOS glory. Although it won't run in its present form, you can use it as the back bone of any project that uses the map drawing techniques discussed in last month's AMOS column.

```
Procedure _MOVEPACMAN
    PACXPIXEL=X Bob(0)
    PACYPIXEL=Y Bob(0)

    If DESX<>PACXPIXEL or DESY<>PACYPIXEL
        Rem ** Smooth Scroll
        If DESX>PACXPIXEL
         PACXPIXEL=PACXPIXEL+2
        End If
        If DESX<PACXPIXEL
         PACXPIXEL=PACXPIXEL-2
        End If
        If DESY>PACYPIXEL
         PACYPIXEL=PACYPIXEL+2
        End If
        If DESY<PACYPIXEL
         PACYPIXEL=PACYPIXEL-2
        End If
    Else
        If Joy(1)=1
         Anim Off 0
         Anim 0,"(10,5)(11,5)(12,5)(11,5)L"
         Anim On 0
         If MAPDATA(PACY-1,PACX)<>2
                Dec PACY
                DESY=PACYPIXEL-16
                PACYPIXEL=PACYPIXEL-2
         End If
        End If
        If Joy(1)=2
         Anim Off 0
         Anim 0,"(7,5)(8,5)(9,5)(8,5)L"
         Anim On 0
         If MAPDATA(PACY+1,PACX)<>2
                Inc PACY
                DESY=PACYPIXEL+16
                PACYPIXEL=PACYPIXEL+2
         End If
        End If
        If Joy(1)=4
         Anim Off 0
         Anim 0,"(1,5)(2,5)(3,5)(2,5)L"
         Anim On 0
         If PACX=0
                PACX=19
                PACXPIXEL=312
         End If
         If MAPDATA(PACY,PACX-1)<>2
                Dec PACX
                DESX=PACXPIXEL-16
                PACXPIXEL=PACXPIXEL-2
         End If
        End If
        If Joy(1)=8
         Anim Off 0
         Anim 0,"(4,5)(5,5)(6,5)(5,5)L"
         Anim On 0
         If PACX=18
                PACX=-1
                PACXPIXEL=-8
         End If
         If MAPDATA(PACY,PACX+1)<>2
                Inc PACX
                DESX=PACXPIXEL+16
                PACXPIXEL=PACXPIXEL+2
         End If
        End If
    End If

    _CHECKFLOOR
    Bob 0,PACXPIXEL,PACYPIXEL,
End Proc

Procedure _CHECKFLOOR
    If MAPDATA(PACY,PACX)=3
        Paste Icon(PACX*16)+8,(PACY*16)+8,1
        MAPDATA(PACY,PACX)=1
        Inc PILLS
        SCORE=SCORE+10
        Sam Play 1
    End If
    If MAPDATA(PACY,PACX)=4
        Paste Icon(PACX*16)+8,(PACY*16)+8,1
        MAPDATA(PACY,PACX)=1
        SCORE=SCORE+100
        PPILL=1 : Timer=0
        Sam Play 2
    End If
End Proc
```

TABLE 3

```
If MAPDATA(PACY,PACX)=3
        Paste Icon(PACX*16)+8,(PACY*16)+8,1
        MAPDATA(PACY,PACX)=1
        Inc PILLS
        SCORE=SCORE+10
        Sam Play 1
End If
```

» a yellow dot. This is a very simple procedure that checks the mapdata() array at PacMan's current position to see whether it holds a value of 3 or 4. Table 3 shows the section of code that checks for values of 3.

If a value of 3 is returned (signifying a yellow dot), the square immediately below PacMan is redrawn using Icon 1 which, in this case, is simply an empty section of floor. The Mapdata() array is then also updated by writing a value of 1 into the Mapdata() array at PacMan's current position (a value of 1 signifies bare floor).

KEEPING COUNT

Next we come to the 'Inc PILLS' line that adds one to a variable called PILLS. This is used to allow us to keep track of how many dots and pills PacMan has eaten.

When he has consumed 112 (the total number of pills and dots on the screen), the player will have completed this particular screen. Then the player's score is updated. In this case, eating a yellow dot awards the player with 10 points, but obviously this sort of thing is entirely up to you. Finally, AMOS plays a sound sample of PacMan eating the yellow dot. Obviously samples of this type aren't built into AMOS, so you'll have to use a sound sampler and the AMOS Sample Bank Maker utility to incorporate a set of appropriate samples into your game. CU

BALL BEARINGS

Many of the *PacMan* purists amongst you may have already noticed that our PacMan doesn't move in quite the same way as the original *PacMan* arcade games. As all good arcade junkies worth their salt will confirm, the original PacMan never stopped moving until he either popped his clogs (a ghost running into him, for example) or very stupidly tried to walk through a wall. Our PacMan, on the other hand, will stop moving as soon as you let go of the joystick.

I personally find this a more pleasing method of controlling PacMan, but you can modify the code so that the character moves in exactly the same as the arcade original if you so wish. All you need to do is to add a variable called 'BEARING' that holds a value that tells the program the direction in which PacMan is moving (1 for north, 2 for south etc).

Then, as soon as the code checks for new joystick activity, extend the joystick checks so that if no activity is encountered, the routine moves PacMan according to his current bearing. Don't forget to change the value held within the bearing variable each time PacMan changes direction though!

NEXT MONTH

AMOS expert Dave Smithson returns next month with the latest additions to our *PacMan* game. In the meantime, have fun trying out this month's code – and try not to have too many sleepless nights!

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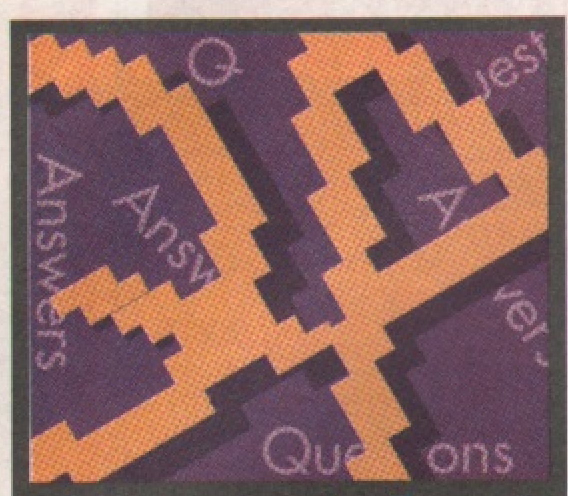


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VIRUS VEXATION



Being a student I found your free give-away of *Transwrite Jr.* very useful. It's extremely user friendly... or at least it was up until a few weeks ago. One day I loaded it to write an essay and the virus checker said 'ERROR FINDING FILE The first file in the startup-sequence has not been checked for link/file viruses'. Then it suggested I change the startup-sequence. Not wanting to risk anything, I turned the Amiga off and tried to load the program again a few minutes later. It only loaded as far as the blue AmigaDOS screen with the 'Unknown Command' message on it.

The disk still works if I load it via Workbench, but this means swapping disks about 10 times, which is very tedious. Is there anything I can do to restore my disk to its original status?
Ming Ng, Tasmania, Australia

It's clear from what you say that one of the commands used in the startup-sequence has become erased. This could be because you inadvertently removed it or over-wrote it, or simply because the disk has worn out through overuse.

The 'Unknown Command' message doesn't occur when loading from the 'complete' disk. The fact that this appears indicates that one of the commands in the startup-sequence no longer exists. Fortunately the startup-sequence only contains the following five lines:

```
Addbuffers DF0: 10
CD CU38:
Brun virus_checker
LoadWB
ENDCLI  >NIL:
```

The first line is fairly unimportant (it sets up a directory cache when reading the disk) so you can delete that if you like. The fact that the virus checker has been loaded eliminates the BRUN or virus-checker commands.

Now all you have to do is check that the CD, LOADWB and ENDCLI commands are still in the C directory of your disk. If they aren't, you need to make a copy of the disk and add the required commands to your copy from your Workbench disk.

500 GREATER THAN 1200?



I own an A500+. Is there any possible way (without selling it) that I can upgrade it to 32-bit so that I can run A1200 games?

I was told that I'd need the A5000 accelerator, a new motherboard and the new graphic chip for the 256 screen colours and 16.8 million colour palette. If there's no way of upgrading, what do Commodore plan to do about all the A500, 500+ and 600 owners?
Chris Curry, Belfast

No, you can't upgrade. The A1200 consists of far more than just 32-bit architecture and a faster processor. I don't think you can buy an A1200 motherboard separately, but even if you could, by the time you've added all of your proposed kit, it would cost you many times more than a brand new 1200 would!

What are Commodore supposed to do about owners of older Amigas? They can't let their technology stand still in an attempt to please everybody or we'd still be using the same basic machines in the year 2000.

Sooner or later there has to be a point when a new machine makes a break from existing technology. They've done very well to keep the new machines mostly compatible with earlier versions as it is.

The price of the A1200 is so low (relatively), that if you want one, you're clearly supposed to go out and buy one rather than trying to modify your existing machine.

A SEQUENCE OF SAMPLES



I know nothing about computers but I own an A600 and a Yamaha PSR400 keyboard which I want to link together. I understand that I need a MIDI interface and a sequencer. Am I right in thinking that a sampler includes a sequencer as well?

If I need a separate sequencer, could you please recommend a good one? I believe there are even PD sequencers and samplers available. My choice would be Microdeal's Pro MIDI interface and *Audiomaster IV* sampler, but I don't know if these are acceptable.
D. Leverington, Ashmore Lake, W. Midlands

There are three types of sequencers, those that handle samples, those that handle MIDI events and those that do both. Most samplers do not include any sort of MIDI sequencers, and in my experience, those that do are not worth the time of day. You are right in thinking that there are some PD sequencers. The original *OctaMED* and *Protracker* are probably the best of them. If you go for commercial offerings, *Sequencer One Plus* and *OctaMED Pro 4.0* are the cheapest. (We gave *OctaMED Pro 3.0* away free on our June 1992 coverdisk). *OctaMED* is very powerful in step-time, but *Sequencer One Plus* gives you far more flexibility when recording in real-time directly from your keyboard. At the higher end of the scale, *Music X 1.1*, *Bars and Pipes Professional* and Dr T's *KCS* reign supreme. I prefer *Bars and Pipes* although Dr T's is more powerful and *Music X* is more popular. They'll cost you between £50 and £200.

***Audiomaster IV* is superb, but it's a sample editor rather than a sampler. In other words you'll still need to buy the sampling hardware; *Audiomaster* just lets you do fabulous things with the samples once you've recorded them. You could look out for the *Sound Master* sampler which contains *Audiomaster III* or *IV* as part of the package. It retails at about £129, but you should be able to buy it for under £100 if you shop around.**

I can't comment on how good the Microdeal MIDI interface is, but so long as it has at least one IN and one OUT port it'll be adequate for your immediate needs. I personally use MIDI Connector from the Disc Company. It has three OUTs, one IN and a THRU port, but best of all, it also features a through connector so that I can still use the Serial port for my modem without having to keep unplugging the MIDI interface.

ROM WONDERINGS



Could you tell me if the ROM sharers currently available for the A500+ totally solve the problem of incompatible software?

If so, is it worth me buying an A1200 now and waiting for a similar product to combat its compatibility problems? Do you know of such a product in the pipeline?

Incidentally, does the A600 suffer from the same annoying problems?
Lee Giblin, Bransholme, Hull

Whilst the ROM sharers available for the A500+ are good, they certainly do not completely solve all compatibility problems with earlier machines.

Any A1200 compatibility problems are likely to be considerably more severe, and less easy to solve, and I seriously doubt that a ROM sharer would help, or will even become available. The trouble is, the 1200 contains an entirely new set of chips which are required to support its new graphics modes. Whilst Commodore have done their utmost to keep the machine downwardly compatible with earlier models, there are bound to be some insoluble compatibility problems.

In my opinion, you should think of the A1200 as an entirely new brand of computer which fortunately happens to have a large degree of Amiga compatibility. Therefore, if it has features that you desperately want or need and you're prepared to sacrifice some of your software, you should buy it, not as an upgrade for your existing machine, but more as a total replacement.

As for the A600, in my experience that suffers almost as many aggravating compatibility problems as the 1200.

DULL PICTURE



I own an A1200 which I have linked up to a Grundig TV via a Scart cable. Although this gives me a much sharper picture than through the RF modulator, it is rather dull by comparison.

I've turned the contrast on the TV right up but the picture is still very murky. Unfortunately when using Scart, the colour can't be adjusted.

Is there anything available which would boost the video output on my Amiga and give a brighter picture whilst retaining the clarity that a Scart connection offers me?
S.R.Cheatley, Blackpool, Lancs

Assuming that the picture is simply dull as opposed to totally non-existent, you need to increase the voltage of the RGB signal. Apparently, the standard voltage of an A500

(and presumably that of an A1200 too) is 0.6 to 0.7 vp-p, which can cause problems. If you can ramp the voltage to 1.0 vp-p or higher, your problems should be solved.

If you're fortunate, you might know someone who's a whiz at electronics and will construct a suitable voltage amplifier for you. If not, you could try an American device called the Video Crisper which does the job admirably. The device will cost you about £25. Find out more by contacting The Memory Location, 396 Washington Street, Wellesley, MA 02181, USA. Tel: 0101 617 237 6846.

VIDEO TITLING



I own an Amiga 500 and I'm interested in DTV as I have a Sanyo VM-D66P camcorder. I'm soon going to be purchasing a genlock, but in the meantime I'd like to experiment.

I've been told that you can put simple titles on videos using the A520 modulator and DP3. I would be grateful if you could explain how you do this. A diagram showing all leads would be particularly useful. I have written many times to other magaziness, but my letters have never been published. Please help!
J. Garrett, Bilton, Rugby

A genlock is by no means essential for video titling, but it does allow you to create a greater variety of effects, most of which are not possible without one. Basically, a genlock allows you to mix the outputs of your computer and camcorder so that one can be overlaid upon the other. This enables you to create titles which appear on top of a video image. It also lets you create effects such as picture fades, on-screen graphics, etc.

If you don't own a genlock, you can simply record directly from the computer. Therefore, any titles you use will have to appear before or after the actual video footage as the two cannot be mixed.

To do this, simply connect an aerial lead from the RF out socket on your modulator, to the RF IN socket on your video recorder. The RF OUT on the video recorder should be connected to your TV as normal.

Now comes the tricky bit. Because both the Amiga and the video recorder use the same frequency to transmit their RF signals, the two signals may interfere with each other.

If you do find this to be the case, you will need to change the output frequency of your video recorder. On the back of the recorder, you should see a small dial labelled something like 'RF Channel 30-39'. You should turn this dial so that the VCR is now transmitting on a new frequency. Once you've done that, you'll also have to retune the TV to the VCR's new channel.

Now if you start the VCR recording, everything you do on your Amiga will be recorded to tape, be it a *DPaint* animation, a series of titles created on *Video Titler* or even a game.

PROTECTION PROBLEM



I'm having a problem with one of my games called *Operation Stealth*. Before you can play the game, you have to identify the colour of part of a grey picture, the idea being that you use the full-colour version of the picture that comes with the game packaging to work this out. I haven't got the colour chart so I can't start the game. Can you please print one, or tell me where to get hold of one.
E. Connelly, Beech Hill, Wigan

The chart that you refer to is part of the game's protection system designed to make life difficult for the pirates. As the game was originally published by US Gold in the UK, I'm sure that they would help if you contacted them. Their phone number is 021 625 3366.

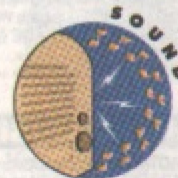
MEGADRIVE JOYSTICKS



I own several games (such as *Street Fighter 2*, *Fire and Ice*, etc) that according to your magazine will take advantage of the extra buttons on a Sega Megadrive joypad. Is it worth buying a joypad so that these extra buttons are available to me? I was also wondering if I can still use the joypad with my other games, merely using one button instead of three?
David Manley, Rumney, Cardiff

I just tested out a Megadrive joypad with *Chaos Engine* and it works fine. Just use button B as your fire button. I also tried it with *Fire and Ice* which used buttons B and C. However, I must say that it felt very strange going from a proper joystick to a joypad, and I would suggest that if you can afford it, you might like to try out a Megadrive joystick as opposed to a joypad.

STRANGE SAMPLING



I own the Datel Prosampler 2 package which plugs into the side expansion port instead of the parallel port. The sound quality is pretty good, but the editing software is definitely not!

Because of this rather bizarre hardware arrangement, the package is not compatible with most other sampling software as far as I can tell. Perhaps you could enlighten me as to the existence of compatible programs?
Dr Doom from the Crypt of Despair (What!?)

I phoned Datel to ask them about their hardware and they said that the reason for using the edge connector was because so many people pirated their software that they wanted to be sure that only owners of their sampler would find the new software of any use.

However, they also said that using this connector enables you to use higher sampling rates because the connector permits faster data transmission.

Regardless of the rather dubious reasoning behind Datel's non-standard sampler, the fact remains that once you've recorded and saved a sound sample, you can use any software you like to edit the waveform. I prefer *Audiomaster* for sample editing, but you may have another preference. If you have sufficient memory and the *Prosampler 2* software will multi-task, there's no reason why you couldn't have two pieces of software running simultaneously; one for sampling and the other for editing.

OCTAMED BONANZA



I've been using *OctaMED 3* since you gave it away on your coverdisk and I think that it's just brilliant. Recently I discovered a module linker program called *Play'N'Rave*. Unfortunately it will only accept *SoundTracker* and *NoiseTracker* format modules as it needs these to convert into its own format.

I used *OctaMED*'s ST/NT save option to save my MED tunes in the appropriate format, and after re-adjusting the tempo (which for some reason doesn't seem to survive the save) I tried loading the modules into *Play'N'Rave*. Although the modules loaded easily enough, the samples all seem to be screwed up and won't loop at the correct point. What's wrong?

By the way, do you recommend upgrading to *OctaMED 4*, and if so, why?
Mark Harrison, Barnoldswick, Colne

I'm not certain what's wrong, but I do have a few suggestions. First of all, both *SoundTracker* and *NoiseTracker* place restrictions upon the maximum length of sample that they can handle. If you load one which is too long, that definitely mucks the loops up.

Assuming that your samples aren't too long, you should be able to load the converted modules into *SoundTracker* and resave them from there to be certain that they're in the correct file format.

Having said that, *OctaMED* features an option whereby you can have multiple songs loaded at once. The only restriction is that each song must use the same instruments.

As you already have *OctaMED 3* I don't recommend upgrading to version 4 as they are almost identical. However, *OctaMED 5* is due out later this year (November/ December) and looks like being a major upgrade which I would definitely buy.

WHAT NEXT?



I am a new Amiga owner and I took great comfort in the January issue of CU Amiga. I am eager to learn as much about my computer as I'm capable of absorbing, and I'm hoping that you may be able to guide me along the right roads.

I'm more interested in the programming side than in playing games, although my children (aged four and six) would dispute the point and I suppose I should humour them as well, with a view to teaching them as I learn.

Before I start to expand my A500+ as I am thinking of doing, I have taken a look at accelerators, hard drives, RAM upgrades, etc, although I'm by no means certain of what they're all fully used for yet!

I wonder if it would save me time and money if I scrapped my current system and changed to an A1200, which I would then use for future expansion as and when my knowledge dictates?

I have so many questions that I don't know where to begin, but I hope that you may be able to help me.
L. J. Burgess, Hemsworth, W. Yorks

When learning about a computer, you shouldn't force it by learning more than you need to. By that I mean, unless you have a particular reason for wanting to do so, don't start trying to learn machine code on day one if you don't even have any need for programming skills. That's not to say that you shouldn't explore and expand your knowledge, it's just that when you force yourself to do something just for its own sake, it can become a chore rather than a pleasure.

Having said that, there are two areas of the Amiga that all owners would benefit by understanding: Workbench and DOS. The Workbench is simply the graphical toolkit

»

» which lets you perform a whole range of 'housekeeping' tasks such as formatting disks, moving files around, loading programs, and so on. Amiga DOS is the name of the programming language that lets you control the loading of programs, and the manipulation of data both on disk and in memory.

If you are planning to use your Amiga at all seriously, you are definitely going to encounter both of these aspects, so you would do well to master them to the best of your ability and at an early stage.

Bruce Smith Books publish four titles that are designed to help you master the fundamentals of the Amiga: they're called *Mastering Amiga Beginners, Mastering Amiga Workbench* and *Mastering AmigaDOS Volumes 1 & 2*. I've listed them in the order you're most likely to need them. They'll cost between £19.95 and £21.95 each and you can get them from BSB, P.O. Box 382, St Albans, Herts, AL2 3JD. Tel: 0923 894355.

As for your children, I heartily recommend that you buy one or more of the *Fun School* packages to help with their education. Not only do these collections of programs help to familiarise the younger members of your family with the computer, but they can assist with educational basics such as literacy, numeracy, coordination, and so on. For more details on availability of these packages, contact Europress Software on 0625 859333.

If these are beyond your means, there are a number of public domain packages that may prove useful. Contact your nearest PD library for a list.

WHERE'S THE REXX BOOK?



I have an A500+ and I have just discovered that the Workbench disk contains a programming language called *ARexx*. I can't find any reference to it in my computer's manual. Can you please tell me how to load *ARexx* and if there are any manuals available on how to use it.

Could you tell me if it is possible to buy an upgrade to Workbench 3.0 which I saw in last month's CU AMIGA?

Stuart Goss, Uckfield, East Sussex

I must admit, I just can't understand why Commodore didn't include an *ARexx* manual with the Amiga Plus. It was included with the official Kickstart/Workbench upgrade pack, but I have a sneaking suspicion that they (perhaps rightly) felt that the average user would never want to use the language, so there was very little point in wasting money on producing a manual.

It is not exactly a language that you load like Basic or AMOS. ARexx commands are executed via script which can be created with a text editor. This script is then executed by an *ARexx* program called *RX*, which itself requires a program called *RexxMAST* to be running as a resident process.

As for a manual, I suggest that you take a look at *Using ARexx on the Amiga*. It costs £29.99 and is available from Computer Bookshop Ltd, 50 James Road, Tyseley, Birmingham, West Midlands, B11 2BA. They can be contacted on 021 706 1188.

No, you can't upgrade to Workbench 3, but then as I understand it, the new features pertain exclusively to aspects of the A1200 and A4000's architecture, so you're not missing anything anyway!

LINKING AMIGAS



I own a couple of games which give you the option of linking two Amigas together. Unfortunately, I can't find a way of doing this without the aid of a modem. Is it possible by direct link?

I have knowledge of hardware, so if there isn't a cable one can buy, then I could make one for myself. All I need is the hardware spec. Also, could you give me any information on how to construct a four-way joystick connector? I know they're relatively cheap, but money's still quite tight at the moment.

Michael Scott, Kingsteignton, S. Devon

What you're looking for is known as a datalink or null modem cable. It plugs into either the parallel port or the serial port of the two machines. They're fairly easy to get hold of and will cost you between £5-10. Contact Videk at Unit 10, Bowman Trading Estate, Westmorland Road, London, NW9 9RW. Tel: 081 204 6690.

As for four-way joystick adaptors, they also plug into the parallel port, but the pin-outs are a little harder to acquire. Videk can,probably help you again, if not, try your local computer hardware store. Having said that, sadly enough, there are virtually no Amiga games that support such adaptors, so you might care to consider whether or not it's worth the effort.

APPLE EMULATOR



Is there any way that I can convert my 1Mb 1.3 Amiga into an Apple Mac system so that I can use my Dad's programs? If this is possible, will I still be able to run Amiga disks as well?

David Craig, Aberdeen

You can buy an Apple Mac emulator for your Amiga. Called AMax 2, it plugs into the drive port and essentially converts your computer into a monochrome (black and white) Mac Classic. In order to use AMax you'll also need to acquire Apple ROM which will cost you at least £100, an Apple drive which will cost another £100+, and Apple system software.

AMax 2 will cost you £169.95. As you see, the total price is already heading towards £400 and you haven't even bought any software yet! I would suggest that you consider buying the real thing. They start at under £600 nowadays.

DISK MENUS



Is there any way that I can put a menu onto a disk so that as I put programs on the disk, the menu is updated? I'm looking for something that lets me load programs at a single key press – F1 *OctaMED*, F2 *Sculpt 4D*, etc.

David Craig, Aberdeen

So far as I know, there are no menu programs which automatically update themselves each time you change the contents of a disk. However, there are absolutely tons of public domain menu creators which are so quick and easy to use that you can update them manually every time that the contents of a disk are changed. I suggest that you get hold of a catalogue from your local PD library and see what's on offer.

Alternatively, you could create your own menu using *AmigDOS*. We showed you how back in the August 1991 issue!

DIY PUBLISHER



I have several good ideas for Amiga games (one of which is only suitable for CDTV). I'm neither a programmer nor an artist, but rather than submit my designs to an existing company such as Ocean, I want to start my own company. Therefore I have a few questions that I hope you can answer:

1. Where can I find artists and programmers?
2. Are the above usually paid on a royalties only basis? If not, would that be acceptable?
3. How many copies can I expect a good, but not revolutionary game to sell?
4. Where will I be able to find a duplicator/packaging company?
5. How much are points 2-4 likely to cost?
6. How do I go about getting another company to distribute the games overseas?
7. Are there any books on the subject of software publishing?

Anon

I'm not quite sure why you've signed your letter Anon; afraid that unscrupulous publishers are going to kidnap you and brainwash your ideas out of you perhaps?

Anyway, there are no absolute answers to any of your questions but here are some ideas:

1. Find out where your nearest computer club is and go along, there are bound to be programmers there. Alternatively you could place an advert in a magazine or in the trade press.
2. Professional programmers do not work on a royalties only basis. When you consider that games usually take months if not years to write, these people need a regular income just like everybody else. You might be lucky enough to find an unemployed person or someone who'll work in the evenings on a royalties only basis, but I doubt it. I would expect that a half-way decent programmer wouldn't work for less than £150-200 a week, but this figure could be much higher.
3. A decent game will sell anything from a few thousand, to hundreds of thousands of copies in exceptional circumstances. The number of copies sold is influenced greatly by the time of year too.
4. There are loads of duplicators etc, just dying for work. Check out the addresses on the backs of game boxes.
5. How long is a piece of string? £1000? £100,000? It depends how you approach things, how much you pay, what sort of packaging you use, how many copies you duplicate.
6. Unless you already have access to a good UK distribution network, you're going to need UK distribution too. Many UK distributors can cover Europe as well.
7. Books? Nah, not a chance. Perhaps a friendly software house might give you some advice but I wouldn't bank on it!

Most people agree that the days when a single person could successfully create, publish and distribute a game are long gone. However, if you're determined to go through with it, hard work, luck and perseverance can work miracles. Go for it!

ANY PROBLEMS?

Is your Amiga giving you hassle? Need some help from the experts? Then write to Mat Broomfield, Q&A, CU Amiga, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Please don't include a stamped addressed envelope as we cannot guarantee individual replies.

If you want to appear in the Sell Out page please call Chris Perera on this no: 071 972 6700

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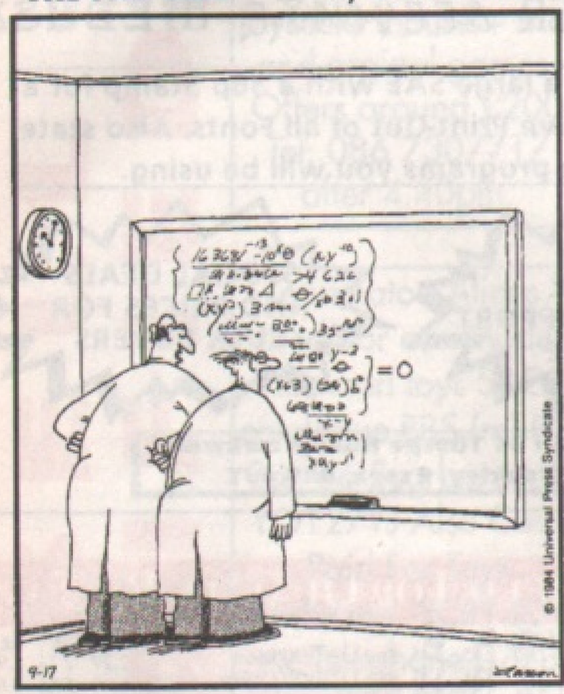
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BACKCHAT

Wearing his best pair of thermal-resistant underpants and industrial strength outer garments, Dan Slingsby gets ready for another acidic outing of reader rantings and noxious outpourings.

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



"No doubt about it, Ellington—we've mathematically expressed the purpose of the universe. Gad, how I love the thrill of scientific discovery!"

TIME SLIP

Do you realise that by the time your magazine reaches Australia, it's well after midnight, and most of us are in bed? Could you please deliver it earlier, say at around noon? If you're going to print this letter (for its technical content) then please print it six issues ago, so that I can read it next year, and impress both my friends.
Steve Murray, Langwarrin, Australia

It's going to be one of those days, I can tell...

ABSOLUTE BEGINNER

I am a complete novice when it comes to using the Amiga as I have only recently bought an A600. I was therefore quite interested in your Workbench tutorial. It was all very informative and straightforward, and I appreciated you keeping it simple. BUT, what on earth are these Workbench hacks that you mentioned?! These little programs seem quite fascinating – but you don't tell me how to run them. I've tried accessing them from the Shell, but no luck. What commands must I type? I hope you can enlighten me.
Michael (No surname given), London

Workbench hacks are small programs which, once loaded up, do all sorts of things to your Workbench screen, such as changing your mouse pointer into a rocket ship which powers across the screen or make the entire screen wobble about like a jelly. There are literally hundreds of these programs available, many of which are absolutely hilarious. It's all quite pointless, but if you want some light relief, then they're the perfect remedy after hours of programming. Unfortunately, none come with the Workbench disks that you got when you bought the Amiga and have to be purchased separately from Public Domain libraries. Check out some of the PD ads in this very issue! They're not as expensive as you might think, as some disks come with as many as 30 or 40 such hacks on each disk.

INSIDE INFORMATION

Imagine, if you will, a home cable service that pumps games software directly into your home. Sounds far fetched? Well it's not, and two such services are about to be set up in the States. Users will pay a subscription fee and need an adaptor – one end plugging into a specially prepared games console and the other into the cable decoder. Once set up, games can then be directly downloaded from the system. Owners will have the chance to preview games with the option to purchase the whole game if they enjoy it. There's also the possibility of multi-play head-to-head matches with other home users. Sounds fantastic.

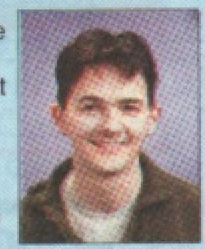
THIS IS A REPEAT

I'm not happy. I buy most of the Amiga mags, but so many of them seem to cover the same prod-

TEAM TALK

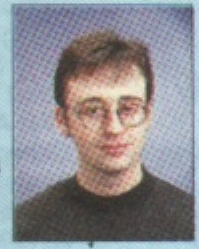
The column containing more lies than a party political broadcast returns with another batch of untruths, spurious assertions and shadowy comments.

DAN 'CREASE FREE' SLINGSBY



The best thing that happened to Dan this month was meeting Rolf Harris. Well, okay, he didn't exactly shake hands and have a laugh with the great man, but he did pass him in his car on the M4 and even got a bit of a wave – or was Rolf trying to communicate something else with his frenzied gestures as Dan cut him up to get a better look?! Sad, really. Dan's also finally about to move out of his sleeze-pit of a flat that permanently reeks of chicken from the Tennessee Chicken shop down below. Trouble is, he's only got two days left on his lease before it expires and still hasn't found anywhere else to live. By the time you're reading this, Dan will either be ensconced in some palatial palace or have moved into the games room cupboard – for which EMAP will probably charge him a fortune for.

JON 'FREE KICK' SLOAN



After last month's white wash at the SensiSoccer World Cup Jon's been unable to even look at a copy of the game without suffering from uncontrollable shakes. He's not had a decent night's sleep since the sad event as he keeps having nightmares where he's being chased by a 10-foot replica of the World Cup. In fact his plight is so bad that we've decided to start a 'Save the Dep Ed' fund. Any contributions towards saving this highly endangered creature will be gratefully received – remember to make the cheque out to J. Sloan and send it to the usual address [*Oi, that's quite enough of your con tricks – Ed.*] Jon's also been making a name for himself with Commodore after visiting their Berkshire HQ for a press briefing and managing to pour a cup of coffee over his trousers. So much for his ninja co-ordination skills!

HEATHER 'RIPLEY' TURLEY



The one-woman baby machine has been a little worried of late as when she had her first scan she was surprised to see that her little creation bore an uncanny resemblance to the chest burster from Aliens. We've tried to reassure her by saying that all babies look like aliens but she's not having any of it. She's even started to sport army fatigues, a greasy vest and large machine gun. Personally we think that she's just using it as an excuse to openly indulge her fetish for paramilitary costumes.
Heather's little sproglet may only be 20 weeks old but it's already started to display some of its mother's characteristics. Apparently it has a tendency to kick out with alarming frequency and has even set out a schedule for the birth. We wouldn't be surprised if it springs out of the womb brandishing a ruler.

ucts. I don't mind when it comes to new games or productivity software, but when I read the umpteenth guide to *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* or *Legend of Kyrandia*, I start to get a little cheesed off. It seems that the whole market has gone 'Indy' mad as far as reviews and help goes while other worthwhile adventures such as *Lure of the Temptress* have gone untouched!

I expect a mag that is different from the rest and not just a clone. So come on lads, get your fingers out and give us a mag that breaks away from the rest.

The Doctor, Norwich

Player's guides are probably one of the most time-consuming features in the mag. It might take a couple of days to review a game, but writing an in-depth player's guide can take a week or more! Obviously we can't devote so much time to just a couple of pages, so we rely on the software houses to provide us with a lot of the information – direct from the programmer's mouth so to speak! Unfortunately, some software houses are more efficient at this than others. *Indiana Jones* featured heavily in all the mags because everyone was sent a huge player's guide covering the entire game. Having said that, we do put together our own guides to most of the top games, as well as giving out numerous tips each month, too.

I think you're just as guilty as we are, though, when it comes to duplicating copy. Your letter was a photocopy and I suspect it was also sent to most of the other Amiga mags. So practise what you preach!

MACHINE WARS

Thanks for finally clearing up the 'my machine is better than your machine' debate once and for all. Your piece on the different types of home computer currently available and how each machine is more suited to a particular area of activity was a refreshing read. Perhaps now, at last, we can lay the Falcon vs. A1200 debate to rest. In a way, your conclusions were pretty obvious from the start. For anyone who has even a remote interest in home computing, it's well known that Acorn have a dominant position in the education market, while Apple have just about sown up the professional DTP business. Correct me if I'm wrong, but even CU AMIGA is produced using Macs and QuarkXpress, isn't it?

I was pleased to see that the A1200 and A4000 came out tops. I've just invested in an A1200 with 80Mb hard drive and I couldn't be more pleased with it. Even though the Falcon looks a better bet for music making, that's not all I want to do by any means. I use my computer for a variety of purposes such as video work (captioning family weddings, that sort of thing), fiddling around with *OctaMed* (excellent package), fractals (yes, I know, old hat, but I still find it interesting) and creating my own *DPaint* pictures. I'm even a bit of a gameshead, as there's nothing I like better than coming home from work and unwinding with a good ol' blast – even if I'm still to get off level two of *Project X*.

I'm really excited about Commodore's rolling development policy, even if nobody else is. I had my trusy A500 for more than four years and it was an excellent piece of kit, but towards the end of its useful life I was very aware of its limitations. I expect to get at least a couple of years out of my new A1200, but I'd be very disappointed if there wasn't a new machine waiting for me when I eventually outgrow it. Two years should be just enough time for Commodore to come up with an A1800 with internal CD drive and lots of other extras, too!

Kevin Mortimer, Hull

At first, I was a bit miffed at Commodore's rolling development idea, whereby new technology would be made available as soon as it was commercially viable. I didn't want to buy a machine one month only to find it superseded by another the next. Now, though, I'm all for it, as it keeps the Amiga in the vanguard of home computing. With backwards compatibility an overriding consideration of Commodore's, there's really no need to worry about ending up with an out-dated machine and A500 owners can look forward to many more years of support from the software houses. Still, some readers are less enthusiastic than others...

WHICH COMPUTER?

With reference to your article on competing computers, I commend you on the attempt to produce an unbiased comparison, but I would like to take issue with your review of the Falcon.

Firstly, the Falcon is not in the ST range. It is a completely new platform [*it just happens to use the same casing stock, eh?!*] and it's not the first Atari machine to use the '030 – this was used in the TT in 1991.

Continuing in this vein, the base Falcon competes directly within the A1200 price point, so how, when you print the MIP factors, can you conclude that it does not compare well for speed? I am not technical, but 3.84 MIPS looks almost twice the speed of 2 MIPS to me! A little unintended bias here perhaps?!

Then, the statement that you need a 4Mb RAM minimum and a hard disk to use the DSP properly is completely untrue. The DSP has its own memory for programs and therefore you can make significant use of it with 1Mb of RAM.

Again, I'd like to take issue with your statement that the Falcon is more expensive than some effects boxes. FACT – It is cheaper than the majority, but this misses the point. Falcon is a fully featured 32-Bit computer that can be used as an effects box, at better than CD quality, amongst all the thousands of other applications it can be used for.

The Falcon also has a full 16-Bit high quality sound system with stereo input/output, 8 track record and playback that records at almost 50KHz (better than CD or R-DAT). This has nothing to do with DSP, but you can utilise the DSP to manipulate, stretch, echo, reverb, surround sound, etc. this data in real time if you like!!

Now onto a MAJOR point. When you state that the Falcon is restricted to 256 colours on screen you are COMPLETELY WRONG! In true colour mode the Atari Falcon can have 65,536 colours on screen at any one time. AND, just as relevant, EVERY pixel can be a different colour!

Another mistake: The Falcon is 16-Bit RAM. This is wrong. The Falcon is full 32-Bit RAM.

Finally, quite how you could give the Falcon a 5 for software support is beyond me. We already have 20 Falcon titles out in Europe and a further 150 in development.

From a personal point of view, the fact that 'It's an Atari', which you used as a con, means to me that it is likely to suffer from a less than five per cent failure rate, as the ST did, rather than the 15 per cent plus that has always plagued the Amiga.

Darryl Still, Marketing Manager, ATARI

Hmm, well it's quite interesting that you reckon the base Falcon competes with the A1200 on price. The Falcon is over 50 per cent more expensive at £599, and the £200 difference could buy you an accelerator for your A1200 making it much faster than the Falcon '030.

It is true that the Falcon does have a 16-Bit true display mode, but I think the point we were making with the display was that it came in standard VGA pixel resolutions and was therefore not as flexible as the new Amiga display modes.

I would like to know what you mean by 'significant use' of the DSP in 1Mb of RAM. You may be able to record direct to disk (and indeed the DSP can't interfere in disk accessing) but you still need samples to be in RAM to edit and manipulate them. 1Mb is hardly enough for the applications software to do this, never mind for the samples as well (which will obviously be twice the size of 8-bit samples for the same run-length).

We did rather skip over the sound system, but to be fair we did say that the Atari had features that would be appealing to musicians. To go into technical detail on every aspect of the machines under test would have taken up the whole magazine.

You may well have titles available specifically for the Falcon – but were they in the shops when the machine was launched? Not the ones we tried...

Finally, I really don't know where you get your figures from. The failure rate of the A600 and A1200 is still around two per cent.

TONY 'FILM STAR' HORGAN

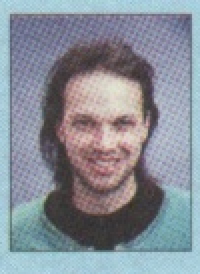
We had to drag Tone kicking and screaming into the photographer's studio this month. Not like him to be so camera shy, you might think, but when he's being made to model an Arsenal shirt, things get a bit tricky. Being a Spurs man, it took him a week just to pluck up the courage to put the thing on! Ever since, he's not been out in public without his dark glasses and bobble hat (a strange combination, but he's a desparate man!). The results of Tone's photo session can be seen on page 22. If you look very carefully you'll see the chains we used to keep him in place.



When he's not in the studio composing the lastest techno trip hit he's been going to grin-correction classes in an attempt to stop being mistaken for Jonathan King. As you can see, it's not done much for him so far. Still, we all live in hope.

NICK 'CAT KILLER' VEITCH

We've always been a bit suspicious about Nick's frequent disappearances but this month we were shocked to find the real truth behind these absences. Nick owns a rather large, vicious cat which has a tendency to lie in wait behind doors and attack him when he's least expecting it. It turns out that the cat is an expert in unarmed combat and often disables Nick's legs with a swift paw to the ankle. Nick's even tried taking karate lessons from Jon in an attempt to beat the moggy so that he can make it to the office but, so far, he's not been successful. He even tried to take it to the local vets to give it the snip hoping that it would quell the moggy's more violent rages but the vet refused to go near it. And... Yes we know that this whole story is highly implausible but it's one of the better excuses that Nick's come up with.



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ROLL YOUR OWN

I own an A500+ with a GVP A530 Turbo HD incorporating 2Mb Chip RAM, 8Mb 32-Bit Fast RAM, a 68030 accelerator with a 68882 Maths co-processor plus two floppy drives, an Action Replay MkIII and a ROM switcher with version 1.3 and 2.04 ROMS. Having paid close to £2,500 for the above set-up, Commodore, in their infinite wisdom, bring out the A1200. If I cannot adapt my A500+, which I adore using, it will mean starting all over with a new machine or miss out on all the new software (this reminds me of the STE, STFM argument).

Until I bought my A500+, I wasn't much of an artist. I couldn't draw for the life of me, but *DPaint*, *MovieSetter* and Eric Schwartz changed all that. Then just as I got used to it all, Commodore stab me in the back. Their constant redevelopment idea has me completely confused and annoyed. I'm all for progress, but releasing three Amigas in the same price range – the crappy A600, the unsupported CDTV and the new A1200 – is going to lose a lot of customers. I think I understand why more people are buying PCs. They may be slow, bulky and have prehistoric architecture, but at least they are easily upgradable.

J. V. Lane, Kent

AMOS DATA

I am writing to you with a query regarding the AMOS cover disk which was given away with the April issue of the magazine.

I know you stated that the program was not complete as you couldn't include any example games and demos, which is fair enough, but confusing as there are a number of these items on the disks, but there does seem to be a data disk missing. The data disk is requested by a number of these example programs including the Hard Disk installer, which says in its text, that three disks are required for the install to be complete – these are: AMOS, AMOS Extras and Data Disk.

It's obvious that you had to shuffle the files around a bit in order to fit the compiler program onto the AMOS disk, hence the Missing Files disk. Could it be that the files from the Data disk were misplaced during this 'shuffle', or was this missed altogether? Maybe the supplier gave you a bum deal and sold you an incomplete version!

I know that AMOS was given away by Amiga Format a few months back, and as they never gave a very good insight into this program I never bothered looking at it, so, out of interest, I unpacked their version, only to find that it also had this disk missing! This version only had two disks: AMOS and AMOS Extras. They did, however, have plenty of example files just like yours.

Please explain where this mystery disk is as it seems to be quite important to the running of this program. Just think, if CU AMIGA wasn't so good at supporting the programs that it gives away on its wonderful coverdisks each month, you wouldn't get gloriously picky letters such as mine.

Mr. R. Cayford, London

The files on the data disk are a few example games which are not vital to the running of the AMOS system. Thank you for pointing out that the installer program asks for the missing disk. To get around this problem and use the installer as it was intended (well, more or less), just rename the disk you have (called 'Missing files') to 'AMOS_DATA' and all the files on it will be installed. The files are not the same as the ones which were on the data disk, but the result of the exercise is the same.

Thanks for bearing with us, and hopefully thanks to you pointing out this problem, many other people will be able to enjoy their AMOS disk to its fullest. As an additional bonus, we'll also be including the data disk files on an upcoming coverdisk, so you can find out what you're missing out on (not much!!).

PC POWER

Now that the extra power of the A1200/A4000 is here can we expect to see the same quality of software available as PC owners enjoy? I am writing this letter on *Wordworth 2* which is fine for the odd quality letter, but where's the structured clip-art, equation editor, basic structured drawing, fast printing, graph function, etc? This criticism isn't levelled just at *WW2*, but at Amiga software in general. I find it ridiculous to have to wait over a minute for a page of text to print on an A1200 with a GVP 40MHz '030 and a hard drive. While I'm slagging things off, whatever happened to the 'at least 10 A1200 specific games available before Christmas' claim of Commodore?

S. P. Buckley, Rochdale, Lancs.

It is certainly true that there are some areas of the software spectrum where the PC has a definite advantage, usually just because it has been around longer. All of the features you mention are available on Amiga programs, though not necessarily the ones you own. *Pagesetter II* is capable of handling Postscript fonts and structured art, but only costs around £50.

The printing speed is more a factor of the printer that you are using rather than the software that's driving it. The processor, etc. only makes a difference when preparing data to be printed, the real bottleneck is the serial printer interface. If you bought a SCSI laser printer and interface you could print just as fast as any other machine. I think your problem is that you are not comparing like with like.

As for Commodore's promise that there would be at least 10 A1200 specific games available for Christmas – perhaps they meant Xmas '93!

INSIDE INFORMATION

UK video games producers, Codemasters, have won their long running legal battle with US game giants Nintendo. The United States Supreme Court refused to hear Nintendo's final appeal to outlaw the Game Genie, Codemaster's video game enhancer. The earlier 1991 decision that the Game Genie did not infringe Nintendo's copyrights was upheld. Galoob, the official US licensee, who led the action there was awarded $15 million in damages for loss of profits for the time that the Genie was kept off the market. Codemasters share of this award is approximately$3.4 million. Does this make them the most successful UK games producer?

DON'T PATRONISE ME!

Many, many thanks to Mr Broomfield for being so erudite in his lengthy reply to my recent queries in April's Q&A section. I'm sure there was some extermely valuable advice contained therein, it was just a little difficult to discern through the clouds of reasonably-well-disguised vitriol. Firstly, I was a little surprised to see it in print at all as it had been posted three months previously, during which time, after much hard work and experimentation with MEMACS and SHELL, all of his advice was rendered redundant.

I did actually qualify my questions, pre-empting any ridicule, by stating that they could be construed as naive, but this didn't stop Mat from having a go! For the record, I do realise that you cannot expect a manual to tell you specifics, it just seems strange that one publisher can produce a fairly comprehensive beginner's guide, yet Commodore who make the machine, cannot.

Thanks for listening, and I will still continue to buy the only mag that insults with style!

Phil Noonan, Runcorn

Reasonably well disguised vitriol? It was so well disguised that when I read the piece you referred to, I couldn't find anything Mat said which could have caused such offence. If you really want to see him angry, wait until he's just had one of his regular encounters with the tax man. As for the delay in answering your letter, that's roughly the average time it takes to reply to an enquiry. By the time you see a copy of CU AMIGA at the newsagents, we've nearly fin-

LETTER OF THE MONTH

NO SHOW

I'm sick of Gamesmaster, Bad Influence and Games World selling the Amiga short. Week after week, we have to endure endless reviews of Super NES and Megadrive games, but WHERE are all the Amiga titles? Every now and then they pay them lip service, and they'll sneak a short Amiga review in, but it really isn't enough. Where are the reviews of *Body Blows, Super Frog, Chaos Engine, Amiga Desert Strike, Goal!*, etc?

This really irks me, as you can probably tell. It's not as if the Amiga is a redundant machine. More than a million Amigas have been sold in this country alone which is on a par with the Megadrive and beats the Super NES hands down. So why the lack of coverage? And why hasn't anyone from CU AMIGA been on a show?

It's not only the TV shows that are to blame though. The Sun, Mirror et al nearly always review console titles rather than the Amiga stuff. It's just so crazy. It's not as if the console stuff is any good, either. All you get is a continuous diet of platform games and shoot 'em ups on the consoles, whereas they could be reviewing the latest flight sim, graphic adventure or RPG – all types of game that are few and far between on the consoles.

What can be done? I don't know, but hopefully if readers write in to the TV channels and protest about the poor coverage, then they'll start to sit up and take notice. Listening to my mates, I'd even be so bold as to say the consoles have had their day, as more and more of my friends are buying the new A1200 and consigning their SNES/Megadrive to the scrap heap. Amiga games are about half the price of their console counterparts and are much more diverse in the types of genre they cover.

David Longthorne, Wimbledon

Couldn't agree with you more, Dave. It really irks me the way all the TV game shows concentrate on consoles and relegate the Amiga to an also-ran. Are they mad? Our machine has some of the best games around. The greatest injustice, though, is that none of the programmes have asked anyone from CU Amiga onto their shows. Then again, who'd want to see a group of acne-ridden, anorak-wearing misfits dribbling over recent game releases (myself excluded, of course)?!

ished the next one. Then, once a letter for Q&A or Backchat finally arrives, it's sent off to the relevant person for an answer, has to be sent back to the office, subbed and imported into a page layout, proofed again, and then sent off to be filmed. And, of course, yours is not the only enquiry we receive – on average, we get something like 200 Q&A enquiries a month! Does that answer your questions, fartface?! (not quite as stylish, but a little bit more direct!)

WE'LL SUPPORT YOU...

I'm a great fan of CU AMIGA but one area I do feel you fall down on (and you're not alone in this) is the lack of follow-up tutorials on coverdisk programs. Presumably you have to pay substantial sums of money to obtain the programs in the first place, so why do they only get a couple of pages in one or two issues? *OctaMed* was the only program covered in any depth; but what about *MovieSetter*, *Expert 4D Jnr* and *Video Titler/LCA*. You did promise a further tutorial on *Expert 4D Jnr* for the February issue, but it never appeared.

While I appreciate that you try to keep all readers happy, I fear you have once again left many readers high and dry with *Video Titler/LCA*. I cringe when I see the words 'experimentation is the best way to get to grips with the system', or similar expressions. It usually means I spend days struggling with the program before throwing the disk into a drawer, never to see the inside of a drive again.

The info you gave was useful but not very thorough, are there any plans to expand on it?
Gordon Nason, Co. Dublin, Ireland

Yours is one of many such letters we've received on the subject of coverdisk support. Apologies for the non-appearance of the *Expert 4D* tutorial – we intended to run one, but couldn't find anyone qualified enough to do the program justice. If anyone can offer help with a step-by-step guide to this amazing package, get in touch, and we'll run one as soon as possible. As for *Video Titler*, Oxxi Aegis have been singularly unforthcoming with a user manual despite many requests over the last few weeks! To get around this, we've enlisted the help of the Amiga Video Producers Group, who'll be running a series of tutorials in the months to come. As an added bonus, we'll also be running a special Q&A section devoted to recent coverdisks, so if you're having a problem with one of our excellent coverdisks, drop us a line and we'll endeavour to help you out!

JOYSTICK THUMB

As an experienced gamesplayer, I'm all too aware of the many injuries that can result from games such as *Daley Thompson's Decathlon* and other such waggle-intensive titles. Over the years, I've suffered a number of such injuries. These days, *Sensible Soccer* on the A500 has not only given me the 'Amiga Arm', but also some new spare parts for my other joysticks! *Project X* has also helped me to gain a fairly new injury, the frozen finger and bruised upper thumb.

What can be done about these devastating wounds? Who is to blame and what can we do to protect ourselves from them?
Nasser S. Ahmed, London

If you think you've got it bad, spare a thought for us lot. The number of 'sporting injuries' we pick up during the course of a year are too numerous to mention. Jon even dislocated his thumb once, which caused much amusement at the time (although for some strange reason, we couldn't persuade Jon to see the funny side of it!).



This month Tony Horgan takes a look at some of the many disk magazines currently available.

GRAPEVINE

Produced by Pazza and Shagratt of LSD, Grapevine is probably the most popular disk mag around. Unlike some others, it concentrates on articles, and includes no demos, source code, sound samples or any other supporting goodies. This has the advantage of leaving space for hundreds of features, which are written by Amiga fans from all around the world.

The articles cover just about anything that's occupying the minds of the contributors, which is usually either sex, drugs, or rock and roll. There are also other features written by experts in other fields, which tend to be boring. Even so, there's so much here on the three disks, 339 articles in issue 14 for example, that you're bound to find something of interest.

Available from: 17 Bit, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, West Yorks, WF1 1DH. Tel: 0924 366982. Price: £3.75 (including P&P).

AM/FM

This is the Amiga Musicians' Freeware Magazine, and is currently at issue 11. It's edited by Bjorn Lynne, and uses a neat interface written by Teijo Kinnunen, author of OctaMED. The magazine itself comes on a single disk, but there are also support disks available separately, some devoted to samples, others with MIDI music, and one with ProTracker 3.02.

Anyone into Amiga music will find plenty to get their teeth into. Features are written by musicians who know what they're talking about, and cover a range of relevant topics. You can expect to find reviews of synths and sequencers, tutorials, debates, opinions, demotape reviews and various one-off features. Some of the more techie articles are accompanied by source code. Amiga-based music is always included, along with MIDI files. Most issues also have one or two utilities. Most of the articles are quite lively and opinionated. Anyone into making Amiga music should get hold of the latest issue pronto.

Available from: Cynostic PD, 85 Wyken Croft Road, Coventry, CV2 3AD. Tel: 0203 613817. Price: £2.00 per issue. Support disks £2.00 each (including P+P).

UPSTREAM

Upstream is a new disk mag that's currently in its first issue. It covers very similar ground to Grapevine, but concentrates on the hacking/demo scene, although they do request 'real world' article submissions for future issues. There are only 25 articles, but then it is only just starting out. You get a choice of backing tunes, and the interface is simple to use. Upstream is worth a look if you can stomach the 100 per cent scene-orientated content.

Available from: 17 Bit, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, WF1 1DH. Tel: 0924 688692. Price: £1.75 (including P+P).

AMIGAHOLIC

If you don't fancy reams of articles on demos and hacking, you could give the Amigaholic disk mag a shot. It caters for the enthusiast who's into a variety of Amiga-related pastimes, such as DTP, graphics, programming, comms, video and so on. The approach is a contrast from the slightly elitist attitude of the 'scene' disk mags, inviting feedback from novices. A few simple games are included on the two disks – the usual PD examples of Othello, Tank and so on. Amigaholic also run small meetings, where fellow readers can swap ideas and talk at length about all things Amiga. Amigaholic also have their own PD library.

Available from: Kevin Bryan, 49 Coutts House, Charlton Church Lane, Charlton, London, SE7 7AS.

BEAT ARTISTS

It sounds like a combined music and graphics magazine, but in fact Beat Artists doesn't major on any particular aspect of the Amiga. Instead, it covers the range quite evenly, from games to programming, through all kinds of applications. Since issue 3, it's come on two disks, which leaves more room for the PD games and utilities. The producers have gone for a mix of articles and software, but there's really not much to read. The letters and advert pages are both empty, but then the mag is still young.

Issue 3 has an interview with Keith A. Grant, programmer of the PD programs Amicash and Amibase. Unfortunately, it's just the usual story about starting with a ZX81, then working through a Spectrum, C64 and finally to the Amiga, and enjoying a drink down the pu b – hardly gripping stuff. There are also reviews of PD software (some with screengrabs), and a few 'classic' reviews, giving opinions on old games. By far the best aspect is the software, which includes Scenery Generator, SysInfo 3.01, Pong, Cybernetix, Zut Alors!, and an animation from *Creatures*. There are also a few samples and IFF pictures included for your own use. Issue 4 should be available by the time you read this, which should offer a bit more in the way of articles.

Available from: Beat Artists, 60 Knighton Church Road, Leicester, LE2 3JH. Tel:0533 703678. Price: Issues 1 and 2 £1.99 each, issues 3 onward £2.50.

THE MAN BEHIND THE HYPE

Team 17 are one of the few superstars in the Amiga world. A lot is known about their games but what about the faces behind the name. Their head honcho, Martyn Brown, gives us his views on life, the universe and the Amiga.

Being a cheerful bloke I was a little worried when the lads at CU approached me to write a column. Don't get me wrong – I do have moments when I could write streams of vitriol about something that's got my goat – it's just that they caught me on a good day.

The reason for my good mood is that after months of cajoling we finally persuaded Commodore to give us the hardware specs for the AA chipset. It's not been easy, I mean we had to approach Commodore in the U.S. before they'd give us anything. As they're not producing a hardware manual for the A1200 you'd have thought that they'd be a bit freer with the specs for developers. Of course, it all boils down to Commodore's age-old policy that everything must run through the operating system. It's understandable that Commodore want to maintain backwards compatibility for their machines but when you're trying to code games the operating system can just get in the way.

While we're on the subject of the A1200, and yes I know this has been said before but, why oh why didn't the designers add a DSP or at the very least another four channels of sound? I've raised this point many times with the Commodore development guys and I'm sure that I'm not the only one to have done so. Why is it then that the company decided not to include one? Surely cost can't have been the only factor. Still, mustn't grumble really as our relationship with Commodore is probably the best it's ever been at the moment.



STRANGE RUMOURS

On a vaguely related subject, there have been many rumours going round recently that Team 17 will be abandoning the lower end machines like the 500, 500Plus and 600 in favour of the 1200. I would like to take this opportunity categorically to state that we are NOT doing so *[then why did you start this in the first place?!! – Ed.]*. It would be extremely foolish for ourselves or any developers to forget about these pieces of kit as they represent such a vast proportion of the market. Whilst it may be true that their usage will diminish with time I cannot see it dwindling so quickly that there's a need to drop them immediately. I can understand why some would want to concentrate on the 1200 given its better all-round hardware. I can't help thinking, though, that had Commodore tackled its marketing and development a little differently there would be a lot more people staying with the earlier machines. In my opinion it would have been better to bring out a whole new Commodore model, not a new Amiga. If they could have found some way of mixing the hardware from the A3000 with the special chip capabilities that the SNES has and badged it differently it would still have been perceived as a home computer but it would have been more a machine for the 90s than what is in effect a souped-up old Amiga. It would have also stopped a lot of people from getting cheesed off with a new Amiga being released barely months after the last one.



***Left*: Martyn Brown basks in the glow of success from Team 17's latest smash hit, *Superfrog*. At the recent European Computer Trade Show their stand was besieged by retailers and journos alike as they attempted to get a glimpse of the development house's upcoming games.**

OLD CHESTNUTS

I know this is another old chestnut but one thing that's been worrying me more than usual is the amount of developers dropping the Amiga. Take DMA for example, they have produced some of the best games on the Amiga but have decided that it's no longer worth their while to do so. We have all been saying for years that piracy will drive people away from the machine, but the pirates have carried on regardless. Well, we could be seeing the start of the exodus now. You may think that copying the odd game and selling/giving it to your mates doesn't really harm anyone but you're wrong. Every time you do it you effectively add to our development costs. It'll soon get to a point where it's no longer cost effective for us to code games on this platform.

Normally we just amble along producing games that we would like to play ourselves but all these upheavals have caused us to take a fresh look at the Amiga market as a whole. Commitment or not you've got to remember that this is our business. Anyway, I'm glad that we did because we saw, for the first time in ages, just what a state the budget market is in. It's awash with re-releases of full price games and appalling titles written specifically for it. Now re-releases are all well and good but the rest of the budget titles are absolute crap. It seems to me that a lot of companies are simply exploiting their public by releasing what they know to be sub-standard products and hoping that because they're on the budget label they'll get away with it. It's not good enough as the budget market represents the bedrock of Amiga gaming with many people able to afford only budget titles. To be honest, we have been neglecting this part of the market for too long. So, between now and Christmas, we plan to release about six titles that are a combination of re-releases and specific budget games. Hopefully that'll cause a bit of a stir and spur our competitors into action.

On that note it's probably about time that I signed off. Sorry guys, I know that there's not that many controversial comments in there but, like I said, I'm just a happy go lucky bloke. CU

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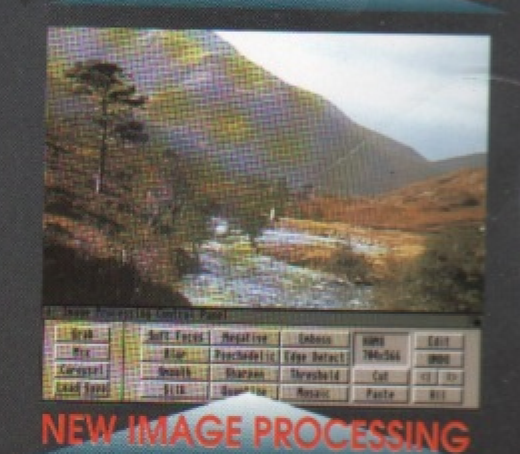
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ARABIAN NIGHTS

Sinbad Junior works for the "fair and just" Caliph as an apprentice gardener tending to his incredibly excessive palace gardens. Today however he gazes upon another beautiful flower - the Princess Laila as she stands on a balcony high above the gardens.

Away in an eerie floating castle dark deeds are at hand. The evil Vizier, in his dastardly plan to rule the kingdom, has despatched a demon from the nether regions of hell to kidnap the princess and cast a mighty spell over the kingdom.

As Sinbad stares up at the balcony a dark shape descends from the sky, mauling and clawing at Laila.

Laila screams and the demon lifts off clutching the beautiful princess. Sinbad makes a desperate leap to grab the claw of the monster, but is left on the balcony flat on his back.

As the demon disappears into the clouds Sinbad is surrounded by the Caliph's guards and hurled into prison on a charge of sorcery. Now, taking on the role of Sinbad Junior, you not only have to escape the palace dungeons, but rescue Laila from the evil Vizier.





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